

THE
L I F E
O F
J A C O B.

In TEN BOOKS.

By M. PEDDLE.

VOL. I.

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T H E

P I E

J A O B



P R E F A C E.

THE circumstances from whence these volumes take their rise, are related in the original with so much sublimity and beauty, that the author can possibly have no higher aim in view than by awakening the curiosity of young persons to induce them to study in the sacred records those amiable characters which are here but imperfectly delineated. And
should

should she thus happily be instrumental to their attaining an emanation of the virtues there so interestingly displayed, she would esteem it a reward greater than the most unbounded applause.

The more judicious and discerning reader, will easily perceive the following work to be a crude composition; but it is hoped the motive which led to its publication will procure a kind indulgence for its many imperfections,

The

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The most grateful acknowledgements are presented to those ladies and gentlemen who have kindly encouraged this publication, and whose favorable reception of it, and generous allowance for its defects, is hereby humbly solicited.

Yeovil, Feb. 1, 1785.



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London, 1788.

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T H E
L I F E
O F
J A C O B.
B O O K I.

DAUGHTER of Heaven! celestial meditation! thy friendly aid I now entreat. Friend of wisdom and of human bliss! Thou, like Hygeia, sweetenest life, and leadest the soul to joy serene, unmingled with the cares of a fallacious world. Thou sanctifiest the morning walk; and in thy meekly beaming eye the dew-drop
A shines

shines with brighter radiance than the
 proud gem which drinks in Indian
 mines the solar ray. And often when
 the silver moon surveys her lustre in
 the reflecting brook, thou leadest the
 rapt poet to sequester'd scenes, where
 the wild stream dashes down the steep,
 and hanging woods o'ershadow broken
 rocks.—Aided by thee, events long
 since immers'd within the gulph of
 time rise to his view; these he ar-
 ranges with assiduous care, and yields the
 rich deposit to the historic page.—
 'Twas Thou, O POWER BENIGN, that
 with celestial wing didst hover o'er the
 Hebrew bard, when in Sinai's wilder-
 ness he sought pure inspiration from on
 high; and, with a beam, shot from
 ETERNAL TRUTH, sung the pristine
 day, when the terrene ball rose to her
 CREATOR'S view a beauteous sphere,
 harmonious and complete.

; Fain would my pen, inform'd by the
 unerring page, assert the wisdom of
 ETERNAL PROVIDENCE, and to the
 wrangling disputant evince its justice
 and benignity.—Oh ! for some spark
 of that ethereal fire which warms the
 sacred lines, and glows in truth's eter-
 nal records ; then, O THOU HOLIEST,
 would I vindicate the dark, mysterious
 dispensations of thy will from every
 impious doubter, and to the clouded
 eye of frail mortality declare thy
 boundless love and goodness infinite.—
 But though no prompting seraph aids
 my humble strain, should this, my weak
 attempt, from suffering virtue wipe the
 pearly tear ; teach modest merit to sus-
 tain the wrongs, the oppressions of an
 injurious world, with meek-eyed pa-
 tience, fortitude, and hope ; it is enough.
 I envy not the applause which genius
 draws from adulating crowds. Be

mine the plaudits of the feeling heart ;
 and whilst the weeping marble perpetuates
 some celebrated name, may my
 cold relics undistinguish'd lie ; unvi-
 sited, save by the silent step of a con-
 genial friend, who at the evening hour
 steals unperceiv'd, and drops a social
 tear.—I ask no more.

Beneath a verdant awning form'd
 of extended branches of intermingled
 cedars and olives, sat the happy patri-
 archal family.—Nature had spread a
 carpet of the softest moss beneath their
 feet ; no glowing tapestry of eastern
 looms adorn'd the social recess ; but
 hedges of myrtle, mingled with wood-
 bines and roses, bounded the delightful
 pavilion. Their table was of the whitest
 marble, hewn from the rock, near
 which, on seats of mossy turf, sat the
 sons of Israel, each by the wife of his
 affection ;

affection; their little ones in innocent pastime were playing around. On one side, on an elevated seat, appear'd the venerable patriarch—his silver beard descended to his breast, and his countenance, though impress'd by the furrows of age, was majestically sweet; the roses which a life of exercise and health had imprinted on his cheeks, were yet extant; and he appear'd scarcely to have pass'd the meridian of life, so lenient had the hand of time alighted on his person.—On either side of him were plac'd the two sons of his belov'd Rachel; Joseph, who had just surpass'd the years of childhood, and resembled those early buds which indicate perfection superior to the glowing blossoms of the gay parterre: Benjamin was yet an infant, artlessly smiling in the arms of the aged Miriam; but in his infantine features might have been

been discern'd the miniature resemblance of his lamented mother. Dinah, the daughter of Leah, was among the happy group : she was tall, and elegantly form'd ; her flowing hair wanton'd in the wind, it was void of every ornament, save a few fragrant buds, which Joseph, with affectionate pride, had entwin'd amongst its flaxen ringlets.—Never had the lovely damsel quitted the protection of her fond parent ; never had she wander'd from his paternal abode. The vivacity of youth and innocence appear'd in her modest eye.—Jacob cast on her a parental look. ‘ May Heaven,’ he cried, ‘ my belov'd Dinah, shield thy innocence—thy virtue ! Oh, my sons, protect this tender plant when I am descended to the abode of eternal silence !’—‘ Ah !’ cried the affectionate Joseph, ‘ far, far from thee, my

‘ my fire, be that dreaded day ! May
 ‘ our belov’d sister, may we all, long
 ‘ be happy in the enjoyment of thy
 ‘ love !’ As he utter’d this, a tear
 stood trembling in his eye. The dis-
 cerning parent beheld it as the most
 eloquent expression of dutious senti-
 ment, and with an affectionate kiss re-
 mov’d the filial drop.

This soft interchange of tenderness
 was seen by the brethren with painful
 emotion :—already they had beheld
 with envy the superiority of virtue in
 the first-born of Rachel ; and the
 esteem which his amiable demeanour
 every where conciliated, was torture
 to their malevolent breasts.—Reuben
 alone beheld the youth with an affec-
 tion ardent and sincere : he delighted
 in his artless converse, and saw with
 rapture his opening merit.—Jacob,
 who

who tenderly lov'd his numerous offspring, was a stranger to the envious sensations which secretly lurk'd within their bosoms; and now the fond sire, surveying the social circle, felt his paternal heart dilated with domestic happiness. To all his children he distributes the flavoured viands; their repast was the elegance of nature, and consisted of the most delicious fruits, pluck'd recently from the bending branches, or dried by fervent rays of the sun:—their bread was of the finest wheat, which Canaan plenteously afforded; and near the bower attended the lowing heifer to yield her lacteal stores.—In those happy days they needed not the pernicious aids of luxury to incite pall'd appetite: labour, or healthful recreation, enabled them to relish the simple cates of nature, and quench their thirst at a translucent spring.—O enviable age
of

of pristine innocence and uncorrupted taste !

Soon as the convivial meal was ended, the patriarch elevated his grateful eye to Heaven, and all were silent ; whilst in energetic strains he said, Oh, ever BOUNTEOUS, ever GOOD, accept our praise ! Be thou ador'd, GREAT SOURCE of every blessing ! whilst thankful we enjoy the various products which the fertile earth at thy command affords. Adore the CREATOR, O my children ! let your constant songs declare his praise !

Joseph, whose eye sparkled with devout rapture, replied, Can man be ever silent on the delightful theme ? Can man e'er cease to render thanks to HIM who form'd the plenteous globe, and bade her produce whate'er conduces to his support or pleasure ? Ah !

B

could

could he thus ungrateful prove, the irrational creation would reproach his insensibility. To the FOUNTAIN OF BENEFICENCE our constant praises shall ascend! they shall echo through the rocks of Canaan and teach the idolatrous around to own JEHOVAH'S awful name. But wilt thou now, our rever'd fire, enliven this social meeting with the recital of thy life? Say how this GRACIOUS BEING conducted thee in safety from a brother's hatred. Often have my brethren wish'd to hear the affecting narrative.—All now seconded the request; and Jacob, with a condescending smile, replied, Yes, my children, whom I ever beheld with tenderest affection, I will indulge your request. Can I deny ought which administers to your pleasure? But where shall I begin the story of my life? Shall I recall that fatal period from whence

whence the various ills that mark my life receiv'd their rise ; that transaction which even at this distance of time fills me with the bitterest remorse ;—when I too freely yielded to the dictates of partial tenderness, and deviated from the path of truth—that sacred line, from which none ever departed and retain'd tranquillity?—Alas! too well you know that unjust deed, when I deceitfully supplanted my brother Esau of his blessing ; for never have I sought to conceal it from your knowledge, but held it up to view, that, like a beacon which directs the unwary bark, it may warn you of those rocks on which was wreck'd my happiness.—So precious is integrity to the human soul, that those who forfeit it resign their claim to peace—what floods of tears has not that action forc'd from my eyes ?—The midnight

air has witness'd my penitence—the hollow cave has resounded my contrite groans—The Most HIGH, with whom is mercy, saw my repentance—saw and pardon'd—yet has the dire effects of that dissimulation tinctur'd my life with sorrow.—O my children! dread even a small offence against integrity more than the tygress, who, conceal'd within the pleasing foliage, threatens your destruction—and whilst you censure my immoral deed, recall to mind my penitence—remember those distresses, which, as the fatal consequences, have closely follow'd, and impress'd those aged cheeks with grief.

Enrag'd at my deceit, Esau breath'd fury and revenge.—In the heat of youthful ardour, I had aspir'd to become the heir of the promises, but far from possessing that felicity I had fraudulently

dulently fought, my reflections on the
 blessing thus acquir'd became the
 source of anguish insupportable.—Like
 some base criminal, I retir'd from do-
 mestic sweets and wander'd in the soli-
 tary waste; here I caus'd the desert
 rocks to resound my cries; I lay whole
 nights expos'd to the nocturnal air, nor
 valu'd a life which was sullied with in-
 sincerity and fraud. In the day time
 I retir'd to some gloomy cavern to
 avoid the search of Esau.—Yet think
 not I dreaded the effects of his resent-
 ment; I would readily have yielded
 myself to his avenging sword, and
 blest'd with my latest breath the hand
 that deliver'd me from an existence
 which was become burdensome. But
 I dreaded the sight of an injur'd bro-
 ther: the reproaches of my own heart
 were more dreadful to me than death,
 accompanied by its utmost terrors.—

At

At length I was call'd to pay my last duties to a dying father ; I drew near his couch ; my mother Rebecca stood near it suffus'd in tears.

I die my belov'd, said the venerable sire, with a voice tremulous and broken—I die, but the GOD of Abraham shall be with thee ; his presence shall enliven thy solitary hours, shall comfort the days of thine affliction.—The ALMIGHTY, who into being call'd this wond'rous frame, now summons it to the dust. Submissive I yield it to the ETERNAL WILL ! The soul, that vital spark of Heav'n, shall doubtless return to its celestial source, to live, perhaps, in some far distant world ; if so, thy kindred spirit it shall meet again, no more to undergo the pristine curse.—But see, o'erwhelm'd with grief, Jacob draws near to receive a last embrace.—

Approach

Approach, my son, and take the benediction of thy father, whose dying voice would comfort thine affliction. Ah! may thy brother mitigate his wrath! joy would then irradiate these closing eyes.—But, no; his hatred pursues thee to destruction: fly then, this land; seek an asylum from his anger with thy mother's kindred; their friendly roof shall shelter thee.—Go, and may the God of Abraham guide thee on thy way!

The venerable author of my being ceas'd speaking, but I was unable to reply. I sunk in sorrow on his bed; I wept aloud.—Oppress'd by the emotion of his mind, the dying parent had sunk into a gentle slumber. My mother then taking my passive hand, led me from his presence. I turn'd to take a last look of a belov'd father, whom
I no

I no more should behold. I saw his countenance o'erspread with a serene smile ; though sleeping, he seem'd animated with more than mortal sensations.

Soon as we had retir'd from the awful apartment, I sunk in the arms of my weeping mother : sorrow had suppress'd the organs of speech, and we mingled torrents of tears.—At length the afflicted matron broke the awful silence.

O my son ! she exclaim'd, forgive me, forgive the faulty excess of my affection, which has involv'd thee in guilt and sorrow ! but curse not thy mother, O Jacob ! she is already punish'd ; yes, the hand of offended Heaven is against me ; it forces thee from my sight—thee, the darling of my soul ! O Esau ! spare thy guiltless brother,
or

or pour thy fury on my wretched head.
 It was thy mother who supplanted thee;
 thy mother's erroneous partiality de-
 priv'd thee of the blessing. Soon, soon
 shall I follow my belov'd to the tomb;
 perhaps, too, I must behold my Jacob
 trembling in the cold agonies of death,
 by a brother's hand. Ah, no! fly, fly,
 my son, beyond the Euphrates' mighty
 waves: there shall not Esau's fury
 reach thee; there thou shalt dwell in
 safety.

Alas! I replied, how shall I traverse
 the trackless deser.? I have never yet
 quitted this paternal roof; I have ne-
 ver wander'd beyond the shelter of
 your protecting arm: yet I will go—
 yes, ye dear scenes of my juvenile
 sports! I will leave ye; I will seek
 protection from a brother's anger amidst
 strangers and a country to me un-
 known. O Esau! why persecutest thou

C

a for-

a sorrowing offender?—But can I ask?—I have deserv'd thy hatred; yet the time may arrive when my penitence shall move thy forgiveness. Perhaps when I am an unhappy exile from my father's house, thy bosom may relent; it may compassionate a fugitive brother.—But O my mother! spare me I conjure you. Rack not my heart by those tears; they are more dreadful to my sight than the sword of Esau.—The GOD of Abraham will direct me; the FEAR of Isaac shall be my shield: be comforted then, thou best of parents; we shall meet again; the HIGHEST shall cause me to return in safety to support thy declining years.

Talk not of comfort, my son, return'd the afflicted parent. What comfort can there be in store for her whose misery is the fatal consequence of her own error?

error?—My fond partiality involves us both in woe.—O THOU ETERNAL, pardon the fault which sprung from maternal tenderness alone! Thou hast planted the love of virtue in the human breast; I obey'd the sacred dictates; the love of Jacob is the love of virtue.—If I have err'd, forgive; on me alone pour thy chastisement, but spare my son. Oh! shower every blessing on the head of Jacob.—On speaking these words, she hastily retir'd, unable to sustain the parting anguish; and when I turn'd to fold her in one more affectionate embrace, she had left me lost in speechless agony.

My brother Esau usually pass'd the day in hunting.—He was now engag'd in those rural sports; and I seiz'd the opportunity of his absence to prepare for my departure.—I took some clus-

ters of dried grapes, which my mother had prepar'd, and a cruse of water from a clear spring that issu'd from a rock, near our dwelling. As I caught its translucent stream, I felt my bosom agitated with undescribable sensations; it was the spring at which I had a thousand times slak'd my thirst, when fatigu'd with innocent sports and juvenile activity.—Ah! I cried, ye refreshing waters, never more shall I recline on these mossy banks, attentive to your pleasing murmurs.—Thou soft fluid, which in thy secret course through the caverns of the earth, imbibest the properties of various minerals friendly to our frame, no more shalt thou refresh my parch'd lips. I shall in vain desire thee amidst the desert wilderness, or sandy waste.

I now faintly arose from the rock,
on which I had sat thus pensively ru-
minating

minating, and grasping a staff from an adjacent coppice, left the abode of my father.—O my children! let me not attempt a description of my feelings at that memorable period. May ye never experience similar sensations! Within the limits of domestic love, may ye pass your tranquil days, unacquainted with those pangs which must attend an involuntary separation from your natal land.

Here the sage historian made a pause, and Joseph uttering a profound sigh, wip'd from his eye a chrystal tear. It was not unseen by the tender Dinah, who in a soft whisper affectionately enquir'd the latent cause. Oh! why my belov'd brother, said the amiable maid, does thy benevolent bosom heave with sighs? Surely there is more than sympathy in these tears.—

No

No cause, my sister, return'd the youth,
 can I have to disturb this social har-
 mony with the symptoms of sorrow,
 save the emotion which the recital of
 our father's sufferings excites within my
 heart. Methinks I am interested in
 his feelings. O my Dinah ! I feel the
 pangs which at that moment wrung his
 soul.

Jacob now resum'd his narrative,—
 Soon my children, continu'd he, were
 my native hills conceal'd from my
 view ;—I look'd around, but the prof-
 pects were new ; I had never seen
 those mountains whose grey tops
 saluted the clouds. I beheld stretch'd
 on either side immense plains, o'er
 whose verdure my eye had never wan-
 der'd ; riv'lets I had never pass'd ; and
 vast herds of cattle who knew not my
 voice.

I had

I had now attain'd a beautiful valley, which was bounded on every side by rows of aspiring olives ;—the verdure of this spot was unusually vivid, and the flow'rs that adorn'd the vernal soil display'd a variety of the most blooming tints, whose freshness resembled those early blossoms of the spring, which have never felt the fervency of a summer sun : the trees were crowded with innumerable birds of the gayest plumage, who fill'd the silent air with their notes that were inexpressibly sweet.

The ardour of day was now abated, and I cou'd perceive the oblique rays of the sun, glittering through the circumscriptive branches. Invited by the peculiar beauties of this charming scene, I rested my weary limbs beneath the shade. Here I saw vines of the
richest

richest foliage, loaded with glowing fruit, entwin'd around the stately palms; and was agreeably surpriz'd by the dashing of a fountain, flowing over the craggy rock. Vast herds of animals frisk'd along the pastures, amongst them I perceiv'd a lowing heifer, who seem'd to offer me her wholesome beverage.

In this charming solitude I could have dwelt for ever. Ah, ye tranquil scenes! I exclaim'd—happy recesses!—Remote from the noise of men, here I could remain, where no implacable brother disturbs the eternal calm. Yes, ye peaceful tenants of the wild! content I would pass my days among your harmless tribes. When arising from the dewy earth ye fill'd the morning air with your bleating, I wou'd also elevate my matin song; and when at eve, in nature's language ye ador'd her God,
my

my voice should swell the general hymn.

The luminary of day was now sunk below the horizon ; the hills ceased to reverberate with the low of cattle ; and the feather'd choirs no longer pour'd forth harmony ; the nightingale alone warbled her soft notes to the vacant air, and in melodious strains greeted the kindling stars that now apparent shone o'er all the blue concave ; the moon appear'd above the eastern hills, and began to shed her silver light o'er the vallies.—After having eat of those delicious fruits which invited my taste, I selected of the mossy turf a verdant pillow. O God of Abraham, said I, extend protection to thy servant. The crowded city and the solitary plain are both replete with safety, if thou deny not thy providential care. No fears,

no anxious doubts disturb my peace ;
 calm I recline on the humid sod ; the
 hand which guides yon glowing orbs
 shall banish every ill.

I now retir'd to my lowly bed, and
 soon sunk in the gentle arms of sleep.
 Scarcely were my mortal faculties sus-
 pended when to my view arose a glori-
 ous vision. I beheld a ladder whose
 aspiring top was veil'd in clouds ; an in-
 finite multitude of angelic beings as-
 cended and descended on it. With rap-
 ture I survey'd the resplendent object,
 when suddenly a flood of glory issu'd
 from above, and a voice from out the
 dazzling cloud proclaim'd, I am the God
 of Abraham and of Isaac. The land
 on which thou liest will I give to thee
 and thy posterity, which shall spread
 far to the east and to the west, to the
 north and to the south ; and in thee
 shall

shall all the families of the earth be blest'd. Fear not then, thou descendant of the faithful ! for I am with thee, and will guide thy steps until I bring thee again to this land.

I now trembling awoke.—An awful dread had seiz'd the pow'rs of my soul. Ah ! I cried, how dreadful is this place ! the ETERNAL MAJESTY has deign'd to visit it with his immediate presence ; the HOLY ONE has hallow'd the sacred spot ; it is the temple of JEHOVAH ! it is the portal of Heaven!—I then collected the stones which had compos'd my pillow, and erected an altar to the SUPREME, who from the Heaven of Heavens had condescended to compassionate my affliction.—The rude heap thus rais'd by the hand of gratitude boasted not the sculptor's art ; the pointed chissel had

never greeted its rugged surface ; it
 knew no polish but that of nature.—
 The Most High, my children, who
 pervades the secret motions of the
 heart, regards the unpolish'd mound
 which genuine piety has rais'd, more
 than the ostentatious pile reared by the
 mandate of ambition.—No lamb whose
 lucid fleece emulated the new-fall'n
 snow, bled on my humble altar ; I had no
 flocks from which to select the spotless
 victim, nor costly odours of the east to
 perfume the fanning gales ; a staff and
 cruse of oil was all a brother's rancour
 had reserv'd me, save the refreshing
 draught which I had drawn from the
 chrystal fount : with these I journey'd
 from my father's house ; with these, pur-
 su'd my way along the pathless wild.—
 I took the oil and pour'd it on the
 altar ; the soft libation flow'd around ;
 it distill'd in precious drops on the
 green

green turf: the herds of animals who inhabited the valley throng'd around; they gaz'd in silence: the breezy breath of air ceas'd to undulate the olives; their leaves no longer danc'd to the curling zephyrs: the sun darted a milder beam, as if nature herself participated in the pious sacrifice.—My vows were mingled with the offering. Never, I cried, O thou HOPE of Abraham! never shall my conscious soul acknowledge another GOD. It desires thee with no less ardour than the thirsty hart explores the grateful rill amidst some sultry desert.—Life of my soul! from thee I desire existence.—Should the resplendent sun be annihilated, should his beams cease to refresh the earth, the springs of vegetation would be suppress'd, and nature in drooping languor mourn; yet inconsiderable the loss to what
the

the rational world must feel, should'st
 thou withhold thy gracious presence.—
 I go secure in thy love ; thy protec-
 tion shall shield me from unnumber'd
 evils which await my steps. May
 some celestial minister accompany
 my solitary way !—A voice that re-
 sembled the soft echo which is heard
 among the hills, when the shepherd's
 pipe resounds through the grove, re-
 spons'd, Fear not, thou son of Isaac,
 to pursue thy destin'd course : thou art
 not alone ; myriads of benign spirits
 patrol the earth unseen by mortal eye ;
 we accompany the virtuous through all
 their various toils ; we delight to attend
 the happy favourites of the HIGHEST.—
 I turn'd to behold my celestial friend,
 but he was conceal'd from my sight ;
 his voice imparted stability to my for-
 titude, and I departed from the agree-
 able valley where I had pass'd the noc-
 turnal

turnal hours.—The sun was risen above the horizon ; broad and resplendent he issu'd from behind the mountains, and chas'd the black clouds from his effulgent presence ; his ruddy beams glow'd on the top of Gilead, and illumin'd the bushy summit of the tall cedar.

I now enter'd those immense deserts whose trackless sand is unmark'd by human footsteps. Here I perceiv'd stupendous rocks in all the wild magnificence of nature, adown whose broken steep vast foaming cataracts dash'd with terrific noise, and in a whiten'd stream, impetuous ran along the deep-worn channels ; majestic trees, whose ancient trunks ne'er felt the woodman's stroke ; and vines whose entwining tendrils ask not the hand of cultivation. From impenetrable forests resounded the dreadful howlings of the monsters
of

of the desert. I heard unappall'd the tremendous roar; my soul was animated with supernatural fortitude—and now an enormous animal bounded from a thicket; it turn'd ferociously towards me, and his ghastly look threatened destruction; he elevated his grisly mane; he approach'd, and extended his horrid jaws, menacing instant death. At that moment I lifted my staff; a power more than mortal aided my feeble arm, and directed the fatal blow, which fell with violence on the head of the furious beast: he writh'd his convuls'd limbs and gnaw'd the dust; vast tides of gore bedew'd the ground; his dreadful eye-balls no longer roll'd, but clos'd in death.—Thus rescu'd from impending destruction, I contemplated my vanquish'd foe; the strength and just proportion of his form; and the beauty of his skin, which
was

was of the purest white, adorn'd with innumerable sable spots ; it was inexpressibly beautiful.—How wonderful, I cried, O thou CREATOR, are the exertions of thy wisdom and power ; they inspire our researches in the abodes of civiliz'd life, and are no less conspicuous in the unfrequented desert.

Thus I pursu'd my way, unhurt by perils, and after many painful marches attain'd the banks of the Euphrates.—Here, with profound astonishment, I survey'd the mighty flood ; I saw the heaving wave awfully uplifted from the bottom of the abyss ; it dash'd on the distant banks with a hollow sound that resounded through all the secret caverns of the deep.—Often had I stood on the oozy borders of the ancient Kishon, and view'd the playful sun-beams in the silver Aroer* : I had beheld also

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the

* Rivers of Canaan.

the redundant Jordan, when swollen by cataracts from the snowy tops of Libanus. Yet what are these?—their united streams would seem but as a gentle current compar'd with that majestic flood.

Soon after I had gain'd the farthest shore, I descry'd the fertile plains of Mesopotamia.—Hail, pleasing land! I cried, congenial woods! beneath whose shade the faithful Abraham pass'd the morn of life, or on your mountains breath'd the healthful gale. Perhaps those vernal groves have witness'd to the awful voice which call'd him from his country and his father's house, to traverse a region distant and unknown. With what implicit rev'rence he obey'd! nor swelling flood, nor trackless wild allay'd his ready zeal!—Oh! may the bless'd example fire my soul!

May

May I, like him, count all impediments of small import, which would obstruct the path of meek obedience!—Such were my meditations as I enter'd the land of my ancestors. As often as I reflected on the pious fortitude of our great progenitor, I felt my drooping resolution invigorated; the tedious toils I had pass'd were forgotten in the memory of his virtues, and every nerve seem'd animated with new vigour.

It was now the hour when the patient camel reclines his weary limbs to rest; when the shepherd seeks the humble cottage; and the pensive ear catches the tinkling sound of the distant sheep-bell, wafted on the silent breeze; culinary fires illumine the chearful cottage, and the busy housewife prepares a repast for the weary swain; clouds of smoke arise from the

brown hamlet, which condens'd by the
 humid air, form a blacken'd column.—
 I now saw the rosy virgins of Haran
 conducting their flocks to the limpid
 brook ; among them was the blooming
 daughter of Laban. O my sons ! how
 shall I paint the sensations which then
 possess'd my soul ? How shall the lan-
 guid voice of age express the ideas
 which animated the breast of youth,
 when innocence and beauty charm the
 ecstatic sense ?—In the enchanting per-
 son of the lovely Rachel every ami-
 able virtue shone conspicuous. My
 heart was susceptible of the power of
 beauty, but it was more exquisitely at-
 tun'd to the love of virtue : how shall I
 then tell you my emotions, when both
 conspir'd to charm the enraptur'd eye,
 and awaken every tender, every noble
 sentiment ; when both united to inspire
 the warmest friendship and the purest
 love ?

love?—I ran and drew water for the thirsty flocks. Within my agitated hand the pond'rous stone which conceal'd the limpid wave, seem'd scarce more bulky than the vernal leaf that flutters in the wind.

Here the patriarch made a pause ; his voice became tremulous and broken—he sigh'd—he wept.—Judah, springing forward, thus address'd the fire : Cease, O my parent to awaken reflections that agitate too severely thy aged frame ; suspend the interesting narrative ; see the sun is already set ; the shadows of evening descend ; retire to thy couch, and the God of Abraham bless thee with sweet repose ! When exhausted nature has thus renew'd her strength, we will ask the continuance of an history which has awaken'd every softer feeling of the heart.—

heart.—Jacob replied, Fain, my children, would I yet indulge your blameless curiosity, but feeble nature sinks unequal to the task. We will retire and invite the somnific balm of sleep; but first let us yield our grateful tribute to HIM whose hand sustains us through the day, and humbly ask continuance of His care, during the hours of approaching night.

The patriarchal family quitted their grassy seats, and in a reverential attitude stood ready to offer their evening orison to Heaven.—The hoary parent was furrounded by his num'rous offspring, and though oppress'd by the weight of age, he surpass'd them all in the gracefulness of his person.—Thus looks a lofty cedar of Libanus, encircled by the young cions which shoot beneath the shadow of his branches.—
The

The ancient of Israel elevated his fervent eyes to Heaven: the solemn circle, all silent and attentive await his words.—An holy priest, offering a burnt sacrifice to the CREATOR of innumerable worlds, stands rapt in celestial ardours before the sacred altar; he feels not the incumbrances of mortality, but resembles a pure spirit communing with his GOD. So look'd the pious Israel, when amidst his surrounding family he thus offer'd an evening hymn to the OMNIPRESENT DEITY.

We thank thee, O GOD, maker of this globe, and all the worlds which move within the azure space; we thank thee for the blessings of the light. Fain would we pass the hours of darkness beneath thy shelt'ring care. Yes, thou OMNIPOTENT! we will retire to our couch, and close our eyes in sweet repose

pose ; thy presence shall banish every evil, and enliven the nocturnal gloom. —

ETERNAL SOURCE of good ! be thou ador'd throughout the wide extent of thy creative love. Ye woods, ye waves, declare your God. Whisper his praise ye rustling winds, and own his power thou vernal lawn, when spring with fairest flowers decks your enamell'd soil. Let your placid murmurs speak his praise, ye gliding rills ; and dews, which soft descending sun-beams bear from the briny main, tell, as ye fly in aerial reservoirs, or in genial show'rs fall on the thirsty earth, how wise, how good, is the GREAT LORD of all. — Nor think we, oft as wintry storms deform the chilly air, that Heaven is less beneficent, than when he leads prolific suns to swell the purple juice. His love is utter'd by rough Borean blasts ; and tempests wild that sweep the astonish'd

nish'd world, still in discordant notes
 declare harmonious goodness. And
 thou, my soul, spark of celestial fire,
 chaunt the exhaustless theme, when ri-
 sing morn irradiates the earth, when
 fervid noon flames o'er a busy world,
 or when soft shades invite to fragrant
 bowers and scenes of rural peace.—
 Angels, whether on this sphere or on
 far distant orbs ye dwell, still let di-
 vine beneficence employ your cease-
 less song.

The enraptur'd parent ceas'd speak-
 ing, but still the pious family kept
 silence, as though the voice of the ve-
 nerable worshipper yet sounded in their
 ears.—At length, after receiving the
 paternal benediction, they quitted the
 social bower, and each with his belov'd
 wife and lisping infants, retir'd to their
 separate abodes. Soon soft slumber
 clos'd their eyes, for tranquil is the
 F couch

couch of innocence ; immortals guard-
ed their repose, whilst the glittering
constellations darted their lambent
beams.

process which sweeps the adjacent hills

never had he enjoyed the view from his window; and he had been obliged to make

THE
L I F E

of the life of his father, and of the morning he had been

J A C O B.

of his father, and of the morning he had been

B O O K II.

SOON as the purple morn dawn'd,
the families of Israel repair'd to
the bower, impatient to hear their re-
ver'd parent relate the events of his
early days.—Him they found seated be-
neath a palm that grew near the social
dwelling. He had already enjoy'd the
odoriferous sweets of a neighbouring
meadow, and imbib'd the healthful

breezes which swept the adjacent hills. Never had he enervated the vital system by indulging luxurious indolence ; he had been ever accusom'd to shake off the filken bands of sleep before the tints of Aurora had streak'd the east, or the morning star conceal'd her lucid horn.—He beheld the approach of his children, and his heart dilated with paternal affection.

Across a lawn yet glist'ning with the pendent dews, Israel beheld his belov'd Joseph conducting the amiable Dinah, blooming as the opening day. Invited by the beauty of the morning, the filial pair had wander'd to the summit of a distant hill, from whose elevated height might be seen extended to the blue horizon, a beautiful campaign, interspers'd with waving woods and flow'ry lawns ; here yellow with fields of ripen'd

pen'd harvest ; there white with innumerable flocks.—Inform'd by a taste the most elegant and refin'd, these amiable descendants of Israel contemplated the luxuriant scenes with peculiar delight ; susceptible of those delicate pleasures which ingenuous minds imbibe from a survey of the various works of nature, their eyes wander'd with transport o'er the variegated prospect, and their hearts expanded with a tranquil joy, unknown to the sons of riot or the votaries of dissipation.

How refin'd my belov'd sister, said the first born of Rachel, are those pleasures which the mind receives from the contemplation of its CREATOR'S works ! how pure the delight which attends such researches ! See where now the golden sun appears to re-animate the fair creation ! the dusky earth at his approach

approach lays aside her sable robe.
 How joyous look the fields, the groves!
 How spring the bleating pastures! How
 smile the dewy lawns! Nor less the
 intellectual world partakes the general
 joy! The human heart expands, and
 the buoyant spirits, rais'd by the sun's
 exhilarating beam, fly light and happy
 o'er the chearful globe.—Vainly do
 mistaken mortals explore the footsteps
 of pleasure in the midnight revel or
 the throng'd dome; vainly they trace
 her through the maze of folly or laby-
 rinth of vice: she is of divine extrac-
 tion, and mocking the fallacious aids
 of art, pours her influence on the un-
 tainted mind.—Why sheds the parent
 orb his chearing rays, painting the
 meadows with each vivid tint, and
 heightening the fragrance of the spicy
 groves; why shines the moon with
 softer light, inviting to the humid
 lawn

lawn or silvery bow'rs, but to communicate delight to man?—Pleasure is nature's dictates; she bids her children be virtuous and be blest'd; and the GREAT FOUNTAIN OF BENEFICENCE, well pleas'd, beholds his creatures happy, in that fair profusion which his bounty yields.

Thus sweetly conversing they pass'd through flow'ry lawns and woods yet glist'ning with the pearly dew's, to the paternal abode, where the happy family assembled with affectionate gratulations.—Again they offer'd their ardent adorations to the SUPREME, and supplicated divine protection through the ensuing day.—When all were seated around the bower, the indulgent parent with a benignant smile resum'd :

Rachel

Rachel receiv'd those friendly offices with a blush, which heighten'd ev'ry charm; but when I inform'd her of the tie of consanguinity by which we were allied, a sudden joy brighten'd in her radiant eyes. I welcom'd the propitious omen, and accompanied her to the dwelling of Laban.—As we were yet on our way thither, I saw a venerable old man approaching towards us, leaning on his staff. Ah! cried I, my amiable relative, is not that majestic person your father, the brother of my mother?—I cannot be mistaken; I see the benign features of her who gave me birth: it is Laban the father of my Rachel.

It is, interrupted she, my belov'd parent. Ah! with what rapture will he receive the son of a sister whom he tenderly loves, whose name he delights

lights to repeat, and whose absence he affectionately deplores !

Scarcely had she ceas'd speaking, when the aged Laban drew near : he cast a look full of affection on his daughter : he saw me and made a pause : his eye was fix'd on my person : he remain'd in the attitude of surprise.—Receive, O my father ! said the amiable Rachel, a youth, who by many painful steps has attain'd our hospitable abode, from a far distant country. Do not the lineaments of that face present you with the resemblance of one still precious to your memory ? Behold, my parent, the descendant of your sister ! the son of your Rebecca ! —At these words he extended his arms to embrace me ; I sunk on his aged breast, and we mingled tears of joy : then, raising his head, he again atten-

G

tively

tively survey'd me. Thou art, he exclaim'd, thou art indeed the offspring of my sister. I see her dear resemblance in thy form.—O thou SUPREME! hast thou given me to fold in these aged arms a son of my Rebecca!—Welcome, dear youth, to the land of thy ancestors! Welcome to the roof where thy mother first drew the breath of life!

I strove to express my gratitude for these effusions of friendship, but I was unable to speak. At length I articulated, O God, how hast thou extended thy goodness to thy undeserving servant! Here, even beyond my most sanguine hopes, hast thou provided an asylum from those dreadful perils which threaten'd my destruction.

What perils, answer'd Laban, my son, hast thou escap'd? What destruction awaited thee?—Rachel was silent,
but

but her eyes seconded the enquiries of her father.—I recounted the rancour of my brother Esau, who, with implacable fury, threaten'd my life; nor did I conceal the ambiguous conduct which had excited his animosity.—Laban reprov'd me for the guilty fraud.—Destructive, my children, continued he, are the deviations from integrity, to mental peace. Alas! he who unhappily wanders from that sacred path knows not till late the fatal maze which waits his guilty steps; a thousand evils lurk, a thousand dangers rise amidst his way; ETERNAL TRUTH abhorrent views the base transgressor.—Ah! may the errors of thy youth inspire thee with fortitude to pursue unerring rectitude of word and will—but I would not pierce thy soul, which has already bled at memory of thy fault. Be comforted; with the MOST HIGH is mercy; his pardon fol-

lows genuine penitence. With me thou shalt be safe ; no perils wait within my friendly roof, that calm abode of harmony and peace.

Thus did that benign old man diffuse the lenient balm of consolation o'er those wounds which had been made by true contrition.—He walk'd feebly on, evading all support but that which a rugged staff afforded. I followed, conducting the gentle Rachel ; and in this manner we enter'd the house where Abraham had pass'd the hours of youth. Here no cold civilities express'd a feign'd welcome ; all was sincerity, and every voice spoke the language of hospitality. —A table was instantly spread before us, and heap'd with whatever could refresh the languid spirits and reanimate drooping nature.—After partaking of the friendly meal, I retir'd to repose,
and

and soon forgot my toil in the embraces of slumber.—Those soft ideas which every scene around me tended to inspire, now brought to my imagination, as I slept, the remembrance of the venerable Abraham ; I thought he stood before me, and with an ineffable smile said, O Jacob ! who hast early tasted of that adversity which it is decreed shall mark thy future life, be not dismay'd though thou eatest the bread of sorrow.—Thou shalt be a father of nations, and kings shall adorn thy future progeny.—I awoke at the dream, and arose to tend the flocks of Laban.

In this rural employ I was often accompanied by the amiable Rachel, whom I tenderly lov'd. Each day I discover'd in her some new perfection, some excellence of mind, which I had not before discover'd. My passion be-
came

came daily more permanent, and existed with an ardour at once the most lively and refin'd.—How blissfully flew the silver hours! The balmy zephyrs gently blew, and chrystal streams murmur'd soft melody in my delighted ear, when seated in the auburn shade, with our fleecy flocks around us, I express'd in chasten'd strains my love. But O how superlative the joy to find my pure affection was return'd by her with all the warmth of the tenderest esteem, and all the innocence of the most unsullied virtue.

The consent of Laban to unite our willing hands alone was wanting, to render my felicity greater than that which generally constitutes the lot of mortals. I had no hills whose verdant sides were cover'd with lucid flocks; no bleating pastures own'd me for their master:

master : the labour of my hands was all
 I could consign for dower ; that I of-
 fer'd the approving fire ; he accepted
 my services, and seven years I bore the
 sultry droughts of summer and winter's
 chilly blast ; hope inspir'd me with pa-
 tience, and love inspirited my ready
 zeal.—At length the day approach'd
 when my servitude should have ex-
 pir'd ; when my unalterable affection
 should have met its just reward : ar-
 dent I flew to claim my destin'd bride,
 when, lo ! abash'd, chagrin'd, I found
 her Leah ; for tyrant custom had de-
 creed the youngest ne'er before the
 elder should unite in love's indissoluble
 bond.—Yet think not Leah destitute of
 charms ; though less beautiful than Ra-
 chel, an amiable benignity was diffus'd
 o'er her air, and in every action the
 mild domestic virtues were display'd.—
 I had ever felt for her a pure esteem ;
 the

the sentiments she had inspir'd were those of the warmest friendship, yet distinct from that soft sensation which owns a tend'rer name. My heart had long been devoted to the lovely Rachel ; it could not be another's.

Leah, bursting into tears, lamented the despotic tyranny of custom.—I know, said she, my happy sister possesses thy affection ; long have I seen your mutual love. 'The youthful hopes which once I fondly cherish'd are no more. I know too well thy honour and thy manly firmness e'er to suppose thy passion can endure a change. No. May my belov'd rival long be happy in thy virtues ! yet, since a father's will has thus united us, shall not the unfortunate Leah at least aspire to thy friendship ?—'tis all I ask.—Say, can'st thou not afford one benign sensation for her
who

who feels for thee the warmest love?—
 Suffer me to attend thy steps, to tender
 thee every friendly assiduity. When
 on the sultry mountain thou languishest
 beneath meridian beams, I will fetch
 thee water from the clearest brook;
 and when thou returnest at eve, op-
 press'd with toil, will smooth thy couch,
 and watch thy peaceful slumbers.

Deep sighs now heav'd my lab'ring
 breast; I could no longer refrain from
 tears; and tenderly embracing her, I
 exclaim'd, O my amiable, my virtu-
 ous Leah! spare me this pain: spare
 those effusions of affection for one who
 merits them not. Rachel is indeed the
 belov'd of my soul: for her my heart
 acknowledg'd the tenderest passion,
 when first I met her following her fleecy
 charge at the gates of Haran. Were
 it possible my love could be transferr'd,

H

thou

thou would'st spurn the unworthy sacrifice. Thy virtue, O my sister! would reject a passion built on the unstable basis of variety. No; we will all unite in friendship's sacred tie. Rachel, Leah, Jacob, henceforth will be but one.—She now reclin'd her pallid cheek on my bosom, and we mingled the tenderest tears that ever fell from the eyes of mortals.

Soon after this Laban gave me the belov'd Rachel also to wife; and for her I consented to serve yet seven years more: that time, which I consider'd as the purchase of the dearest jewel of my soul, flew gayly o'er my head. No toil appear'd excessive, no labour tedious; chearful as the hour which call'd me to my rural task I arose, and led the flocks of Laban to the verdant pastures or more convenient

ent shade ; and when the day departed from the mountains, I eager sought my home, where love conjugal and domestic peace crown'd each succeeding hour.—Leah had now blest'd me with a son ; thee Reuben, my first born, had open'd thine infant eye-lids on the light ; thee it was whose artless innocence receiv'd her first maternal smile. I beheld with rapture thy pleasing form ; I loaded thee, yet unconscious of my fondness, with careffes ; I bore thee in my paternal arms to the aged Laban : kindly he blest'd thee, and wetted (good old man !) thy face with tears of joy.

Twice ten years the sun had measur'd his annual circuit through the Heavens since I had quitted the land of my nativity.—I had follow'd the flocks of Laban o'er the mountain's craggy brow, and

watch'd the tender lambs whilst feeding
 on the fragrant herbage of the flow'ry
 vale.—THE RULER OF THE SEASONS
 bless'd my patient toil; no chilly blast
 or lightning's fatal flash destroy'd my
 fleecy charge; yet were my constant
 cares unblest'd by Laban's smiles. No
 looks benign repaid my hours of la-
 bour; but caprice, ever veering with
 the inconstant winds, mark'd his un-
 steady conduct. Scarce did the silver
 moon display her new born crescent to
 the gladden'd swains; but some new
 change my wages had sustain'd. Long
 I bore in silence his unkindness; the
 voice of murmuring fell not from my
 lips; yet soon my pensive look evinc'd
 the rankling grief.—I left the chearful
 converse of the shepherds, and from
 their hospitable feasts retir'd, to rumi-
 nate alone on that unkindness which had
 pierc'd

pierc'd my soul. I indulg'd those local
 prejudices, which, like the magnetic
 powers of nature, impel the human
 mind towards its natal soil ; my fancy
 delineated the plains of Mamre ; not a
 tree which spreads its umbrageous
 shade, nor stream which bubbled near
 that much-lov'd spot, but rose to my
 remembrance. I long'd to lead my
 smiling infants to the peaceful groves,
 recount the pastimes of my youth, and
 shew them where the loveliest blossoms
 grew. The ETERNAL, who with won-
 d'rous skill has interwoven those tender
 threads of fond attachment in our frame,
 beheld the rising wish. In a vision of
 the night the ALMIGHTY VOICE com-
 manded me to return to this my natal
 land. I imparted my design to the
 faithful partners of my heart ; with au-
 dacity they acceded to my purpose, and
 urg'd our quick departure.—Let us,
 said

said I, repair to Laban, and acquaint him of our intension ; we will implore his benediction, and bid him a last adieu. But, ah ! with what language shall I approach him ? Must truth be hid within the veil of soft complacence ? or shall I upbraid him with his cruelty, and say, no longer able to sustain unjust severity, I leave his roof to explore my native land ? Shall then reproaches meet the father of my Rachel and my gentle Leah ? No ; we will secretly depart ; and though no mutual benedictions mark the parting hour, our prayers shall reach the throne of the SUPREME ; they shall invoke eternal blessings on his aged head.—Fraught with these sentiments we departed with our households ; Rachel bore in her maternal arms the infant Joseph, and Leah conducted her numerous offspring. The flocks, which by just
right

right were mine, went bleating on their way ; and soon the house of Laban, the rocks, the woods, which shelter his abode, were no longer within our view.

On the third day we had attain'd a mountain whose brow was shaded with majestic cedars ; on its rugged sides the woodbine crept and odorous myrtles grew spontaneous ; its foot was water'd by a chrystal riv'let, on whose oozy margin the tir'd flocks repos'd, and we spread our tents beneath the inviting shade.—Here as we sat alternately caressing our youthful offspring, Our father, said the tender Rachel, no longer beholds us with affection ; he has forgotten the ties of nature.—Whilst thus she spake, her countenance became pale ; her lovely frame was agitated by the emotions of terror, and her brilliant eyes were immoveably
fix'd

fix'd on a distant eminence. I sought to descry the object of her fears, and soon perceiv'd the verdant top of Gilead cover'd with a vast multitude; they were dispers'd on every side; the acclivity of the mount was cover'd by their numbers. It was Laban, attended by his numerous household.—Secure in conscious innocence I arose from my seat to await his arrival. He drew near; his countenance was inflam'd by resentment. With a voice interrupted by rage he utter'd the bitterest reproaches.—I bore, unmov'd, the effusions of his unjust displeasure, as a rock whose solid base, fix'd on earth's unshaken centre, braves all the fury of the foaming billows.—O'ercome by his emotions, he sunk at last in the arms of his attendants. I approach'd him with tenderness: Calm, O my father, I exclaim'd, these transports of anger; by
that

that endearing name, I conjure you hear the avowal of my innocence. Can I injure even in thought the parent of my belov'd? those dear objects of my conjugal affection, these innocents, forbid the impious intent. We have quitted thy paternal roof without a last farewell; wherefore should I wound thy aged ear with just reproaches? Thy unkindness chac'd us thence; thy conscious breast bears witness whilst I speak, that with cruelty thou hast repaid my unwearied toil, and ten times chang'd my wages; yet from thy fields I never have seduc'd the lowing kine; the vagrant lamb, led by my friendly crook, explor'd thy distant fold; I fled not from the task when day's fierce beams fell on my head, or dews of night descended on the earth.

As I thus spake, I saw the countenance of Laban soften'd towards me :

I

the

the traces of anger disappear'd; he rose, and caught me in his trembling arms: Forgive me, O my son! he cry'd; forgive my unjust displeasure. Bless'd be the God of Abraham, whose providence hath restrain'd me from injuring thee! Henceforth let mutual confidence and love inspire each breast.

Transported at the welcome accents, I broke from his embrace; I flew to the rock where nicely plac'd by nature's hand the massy stratum lies; I collected from thence the stones which time's strong arm had loosen'd, and impetuous torrents had sever'd from their long repose, of which I form'd a pillar.—This heap, I said, O my fire! shall witness our mutual covenant:—He approach'd, and we consecrated the unpolish'd monument with tender reconciliation and unfeign'd love.—I
ran

ran to the foot of the mountain where the pastures were repos'd, and seizing a spotless kid, offer'd it on the heap to the God of Abraham ; after which a repast was prepar'd.—My brethren of the house of Laban sat around ; Rachel and Leah, with their smiling train, completed the social circle ; friendship and peace animated every happy face.—The waving cedars gently bent their graceful heads, as if in token of our harmony ; the song of the lark seem'd unusually melodious ; and the soft echoes of the shepherd's pipe from the vallies beneath, ascended with the fanning zephyrs.—Transported at the glad occurrence of the day, I seiz'd a lute ; a joy extatic had inspir'd my soul ; I touch'd the silver strings with more than usual skill, and thus express'd the charms of social love. O Heaven-born passion ! gift of God ! thy kindly
I 2 influence

influence shed around; and tell the
 breast which ne'er admits thee as its
 guest, that thou, and thou alone, im-
 part'st to nature all her powers to please.
 What though the genial year each
 choicest gift prepares to gladden man,
 the flinty heart that ne'er was soften'd
 by thy power, is dead to all the varied
 joy: for him birds chaunt, rills flow,
 and flowers bloom in vain. Come, so-
 cial love! and with thy filken wing, soft
 as angelic plumes, hover around my
 peaceful tent; though herds and flocks,
 though oil and wine, and vallies full of
 ripen'd grain, grace not my humble lot,
 possess'd of thee, I have enough, and
 my full heart with joy shall overflow.

Thus united in the amiable bands of
 concord, reluctantly we view'd the part-
 ing moment—it approach'd.—Laban
 arose—he embrac'd his daughters, whose
 hearts

hearts now penetrated by returning love, felt all the ardour of filial tenderness.—All stood silent, each strove to speak; but sighs and tears alone express'd our feelings.—At length, with fervent prayers and mutual benedictions we separated, and with my household I pursu'd my way.

The intense heat of the sun (for that orb was now in that point of the Heavens, when his ardent beams shed unremitting fervors on the earth) prevented us from pursuing our journey, during the mid-day hours: we chose that agreeable season when the dews yet glisten on the grass, and the air is refresh'd by cooling breezes of the night; and passing the sultry day beneath some umbrageous shade, again renew'd our progress, when the lamp of day had conceal'd his effulgence behind

hind the western hills.—During the nocturnal hours, we were directed in our course o'er immense deserts, by those luminaries who ever keep their invaried station in the azure space; for whilst I fed the flocks of Laban, in the open plains of Mesopotamia, I had learn'd from shepherds the knowledge of those celestial bodies; I had studied the motions of the planetary hosts, and knew the shining constellations by their names.—Thus was I enabled to conduct a numerous people o'er trackless wilds, when the silver moon had from the fount of light turn'd her averted orb.

One fervent day we had halted on the banks of a clear stream, near whose borders grew a grove of spreading palm trees; the flocks and herds were dispers'd o'er the wide pasturage before us; I left my companions, and penetrated

trated into the deep recesses of the wood:—Here I beheld prodigious oaks, which proudly stretch'd their mossy branches to the skies; and matted briars, whose wild luxuriance human foot had never restrain'd.—In a situation so sequester'd, I indulg'd those pensive meditations which for some time had possess'd my mind, as often as I reflected on the rancour of my brother, which I fear'd even an absence of twice ten years was ineffectual to suppress. When I beheld you, my children, then in the puerile season of infancy, and those who gave you birth, my apprehensions became still more dreadful. I could have brav'd alone the resentment of an angry brother; I could even have sacrific'd my life to appease his displeasure: but those dear objects who accompanied me, whose safety I esteem'd far more precious than
my

my own, awaken'd every terrible anxiety.—I bent myself on the mossy bank, and lifted my petitions to the GREAT RULER OF EVENTS. Suspend, I cried, O thou GOD OF PEACE! the wrath of my embitter'd brother. Oh! may my meek submission, soften his long cherish'd hatred! May it disappear as the shades of night before the risen day! Let fraternal love, so grateful in thy sight, kindle its resplendent torch, and social harmony again irradiate the house of Isaac!

Whilst thus I pour'd out my soul before the OMNIPOTENT, the impervious wood, whose interwoven branches denied admittance to the solar ray, became suddenly illuminated with a dazzling splendor beyond the brightness of the mid-day sun; I beheld two effulgent bands of celestial beings passing through

through the glade, and a voice sweeter than the most mellifluous sounds which ever were form'd by mortal organs, pronounc'd, Thy prayers are heard thou child of adversity ! The Most HIGH, who has promis'd to make of thee a great nation, will assuage thy brother's fury. Fear not to pursue thy way ; thou and thy households are safe beneath ALMIGHTY LOVE.—Enrap-tur'd at the glorious vision I arose.—These I exclaim'd, are the hosts of the OMNIPOTENT ; and thou, hallow'd spot ! henceforth I name Mahanaim.

I now return'd to the shade, where Rachel and Leah (seated on the grass) were watching the innocent sports of the infant train.—We assembled our servants and flocks, and proceeded on our way.—As we drew near the banks of the limpid Jordan, my memory re-

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verted to the day when pensive and alone I pass'd that stream, leaning on my staff, the sole supporter of my solitary steps.—I was now possess'd of innumerable herds, and accompanied by those on whose faithful breast I could safely repose all my cares; whose tenderness alleviated every grief and heighten'd every joy. My social hours were crown'd by the lisping prattle of a numerous infant train, who in tacit eloquence implor'd my love. Imagination painted the contrasted scenes, and my gratitude surpass'd the powers of utterance.

I then carefully survey'd my flocks, and of their prime selected presents for my brother Esau.—I distributed them in companies. The bleating pastures, as if conscious of their designation, and pleased to become a sacrifice to
fraternal

fraternal reconciliation, went swiftly on their way, follow'd by the messengers whom I had instructed to address my offended brother; to acquaint him of our approach; and to appease his long cherish'd hatred.—Soon they return'd, and acquainted us that Esau rapidly approach'd with four hundred men.—My heart sunk within me at the dreadful tale, as often as I cast my eye on the trembling mothers and their helpless charge.—They had pass'd the river, and were now calmly reposing within the tents. I alone remain'd on the other side, that uninterrupted by human voice, I might pour out my petitions before the God of my fathers.

Now solemn midnight had spread her sable mantle o'er the hemisphere; no friendly luminary shot its lambent beams; dark clouds obscur'd the face

of Heaven, as if to sympathize with the deep gloom which pervaded my anxious mind; the hollow winds murmur'd through the caverns of the rock, and agitated the rustling palms; the adjacent brook pensively flowing, seem'd to chide the latent pebbles, which broke its angry wave; at a distance I seem'd to hear the clashing of spears and confus'd voices of a great multitude. A train of dreadful ideas terrified my imagination; one moment I thought I beheld the dear possessors of my soul, hastily repassing the stream, pursu'd by a revengeful brother; then, to augment the horrors of the scene, fancy represented him as approach'd; she drew the murd'rous sword, and plung'd it in the breast of innocence.—Horror encompass'd me on every side.—I rose from the dank earth, yet unable to explore my way amidst the impenetrable darkness.

darkness.—On a sudden the gloom became enlighten'd by a faint gleam, resembling that gentle light which is effus'd from the glistening stars, when clouds conceal not the cerulean vault. I obscurely discern'd a human form approaching ; it drew near ; my extended arm was forcibly arrested ; I was overpower'd by my adversary, and sunk before him.—Instantly my nerves acquir'd new vigour ; my strength reviv'd with increas'd ardour. As a lion rushes on his prey, I seiz'd my formidable enemy ; his enfeebled limbs no longer sustain'd the conflict ; he sunk to the earth.—The eastern sky was now painted by the crimson blushes of the morn, and the grey twilight had stole o'er the dewy lawns. I beheld my vanquish'd opponent, and a secret awe thrill'd through my frame.—His figure was that of healthful age, unfurrow'd
by

by the wrinkles of time ; and the traces of youth in his venerable countenance mock'd the silver tresses which fell on his graceful shoulders.—I was embarrass'd, yet knew not why : his form was calculated to inspire love, yet it awaken'd in my soul a profound reverence ; and through it I thought I could perceive a being more than mortal. I was about to prostrate myself at his feet, but he gently restrain'd me. Thy sensations, said he, O son of Isaac ! are not unknown to me : no feeble child of frail mortality has with thee contended ; thou beholdest before thee an inhabitant of the skies, sent by the HIGHEST to dissipate thy fears, and by thy conquest over a celestial nature, to revive thy drooping courage. No longer be thou Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name. The HOLY ONE will perform his covenant, and thou shalt be
a father

a father of nations ; fear not then to meet thy brother ; thy confidence in the divine promises shall be thy shield. — With these words he departed, and I pass'd the ford inspir'd with dauntless fortitude.

Reuben had retir'd a short space from his companions, and was attentively surveying the sportive fishes as they glided through the liquid element: the waters, gently agitated with their motion, reflected the splendour of the rising sun, and emulated the jewels of the east. Suddenly he lifted his eye to the neighbouring hill ; he started ! all pale and trembling, he ran towards us, and pointed to the eminence which was now cover'd by the attendants of Esau, whom I plainly discern'd amongst the host : methought an hostile fury urg'd his speed. Rachel, with her infant son,
ran

ran hastily towards me ; and Leah, with maternal anxiety, sought my protection : I cheer'd them with assurances of the favour of the SUPREME ; and offering a mental prayer, prepar'd to meet my fate.—Esau swiftly approach'd ; he descended into the plain ; we met ; strong emotion appear'd in either face ; the boist'rous passions were subfided ; peace and filial love enliven'd his features ; we ran with extended arms, and affectionately embrac'd : speechless we remain'd whilst every amiable feeling was express'd by tears.—At length I exclaim'd, Is this, GREAT GOD ! the brother who once fought my life ?—Ah ! is it Esau who thus presses me to his melting bosom ? O felicity unutterable !—Yes, he replied, my belov'd Jacob, it is Esau who asks a place in thy affections, and thus welcomes thee to thy natal land. Never more shall a
brother's

brother's anger force thee from a parent's roof ; we will henceforth live in love ; the idolatrous nations shall witness our harmony, and emulate the fair example.

We now spread our tents far o'er the flow'ry vale.—I ran to the flocks, and took from thence a tender kid ; it was dress'd with the most odoriferous herbs, and cakes of the finest flour were plac'd on the social board.—Esau, with a benign aspect, sat down to the repast ; it was the feast of renovated love.—I presented to him my belov'd Rachel and her infant son ; he receiv'd them with cordial endearment. Be thou, said he, my beauteous sister, the happy mother of a numerous offspring ; and may that blooming innocent reward thy maternal cares !—Next approach'd the amiable Leah, leading her youthful

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train.

train.—His prayers and pious benedictions were pour'd on all.—Thus pass'd the hours in sweetest harmony, whilst the day, with silent step, twice stole o'er our heads; then, with mutual vows of everlasting friendship, we separated. Esau return'd to Seir, and I advanc'd towards these fertile plains.—These I attain'd, but O my sons! how shall I tell the sad catastrophe which mark'd the fatal journey? Rachel, my lov'd wife, the sole possessor of my youthful vows, was no more!—Thou, Ephrath, witness'd the painful struggle which from her lovely form separated the sweetest soul that e'er inform'd mortality.

I had one day been to the top of a neighbouring hill, to view the adjacent country.—Methought all nature wore a pensive aspect; the warbling birds chaunted a mournful dirge, and an unusual

usual heaviness oppress'd me.—I return'd, O Heavens! but only to receive the last embrace of my expiring Rachel.—Feeble and pale she summon'd me towards her.—I flew, I stood wildly gazing on her almost breathless form.—She extended her pallid arm, and pointing to the lovely infant which lay beside her, Receive, said she, O best of men, this last dear pledge of my affection; name him Benoni, and in his youthful form sometimes recall the memory of his ill-fated mother. I die, my lov'd Jacob. Whilst life yet trembles in my veins, let me fold thee to my faintly beating heart. One dear, one last embrace, to thank thee for thy love!—Ah me! I faint.—Farewell.

As a lily, faded by the chilly blast,
lies wither'd on the mournful soil—as
the rose of Sharon, struck by the forked

flash, hangs its yet lovely head—so, silent in the icy arms of death, lay the belov'd of my soul.—But spare me, O my children! nor suffer me to rend this aged heart with the sad recital.—The rest of my history you know.

Here tears suppress'd the voice of the venerable narrator.—Joseph heav'd loud sobs on the bosom of his afflicted sire.—Dinah, the tender Dinah, wetted her pearly cheek with the sympathetic drops.—All join'd the venerable mourner; every face was clouded with grief.

In a few moments the majestic sufferer became tranquil; anguish fled his grief-worn cheek, and his countenance again assum'd the placid aspect of all-forbearing patience. Inspir'd with full conviction of the ETERNAL WISDOM and BENEFICENCE, he suppress'd

press'd the tear of woe.—Thus, the Christian philosopher, whose enlighten'd view beholds celestial joys awaiting to reward his mournful pilgrimage, animated with the divine hope, becomes superior to his sorrows, and smiles serenely on the storms which shake an astonish'd world.

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B O O K III.

THE amiable Joseph had now attain'd that pleasing period when reason mounts her throne to guide the ardent passions—when vivid health fits on the youthful cheek, and sprightly fancy gilds the fleeting hours.—As a skilful florist watches with care a favourite plant, screens it from fervent heat or chilling blasts, Jacob with tenderest

tenderest solicitude regarded the son of his belov'd.—Each day display'd in him a mind inspir'd by rectitude, and sentiments ennobled by benevolence.—But who can paint the parent's transport when contemplating this fair dawn of virtue?—Tenderly he would exclaim, Thou precious, latest gift of Heaven! surely thou wast given to compensate for the various ills which mark my adverse life. O may the ETERNAL strengthen and confirm thy opening worth, and make thee all the fond parental heart can ask!

Desirous to inspire his belov'd Joseph with a diligent attention to the works of nature, Jacob would sometimes conduct him to a remote forest, and unfold to him the beauty and usefulness of the vegetable world.—An oak, whose decay'd trunk lay reclin'd
on

on its parent earth, often afforded them a seat, whilst an adjacent tree, which ne'er had felt the destroying hand of time, spread o'er them an umbrageous shade.—Here the instructive sire pointed out to his attentive view each plant and herb, explaining their several properties.—Behold, my son, he would say, those pleasing traces of creative love!—How extensive is divine beneficence!—profusely has it spread what e'er is salutary to the human frame;—this vernal leaf does in its silken fibres hold the cooling juice which quenches feverish thirst, and allays the fierce disease;—that a somnific quality contains, to compose the wearied mind and win refreshing sleep;—some can exhilarate the drooping spirits, and others blunt the edge of pain;—when chance or violence inflict the deadly wound, and life flows out with every languid

languid pulse, these shall arrest the purple tide and recall departing strength;—no bud so mean, or leaf, howe'er conceal'd from view, springs up in vain;—all have their use;—all are design'd to invigorate health, and repel the force of pain.—Joseph, charm'd, yet astonish'd, exclaim'd, What kindness, O my father! what unwearied beneficence is here display'd!—Shall then discordant passions rend the human heart when nature through her various works breathes the sweet voice of love!

Sometimes he accompanied his father to those remote caverns which lie far beneath the flowery surface of the ground; there they explor'd the veiny marble, plac'd with exactest art, when chaotic atoms, at the DIVINE VOICE, retir'd to their distant stations—minerals or fossils—all that can amuse or

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charm

charm the eye, appear'd to their research.—When the resplendent sun had withdrawn his beams, they often attain'd the summit of a neighbouring eminence, where they contemplated the vast etherial arch, and trac'd the GLORIOUS ARCHITECT amidst kindling stars.—What hand, invisible, said Jacob, sustains these glowing orbs ; regions, perhaps, of habitable life, with their enlightening suns.—Whence the regularity with which they move ?—None encroaches on another's orbit, but all pursue their constant round with nicest harmony.—What wisdom infinite was necessary to affix their several stations !—What power divine sustains them through revolving ages !—how good—how wise, my belov'd Benjamin (surpassing all our finite reason can conceive), must be that BEING who thus profusely decorated the unbounded fields

fields of space !—These are the studies which light devotion's sacred flame, and impress the wond'ring mind with the most exalted ideas of the divine attributes.—These cherish and improve the social passions, and yield a degree of pleasure which the indolent and incurious ne'er can know.

Not less assiduous was the instructive fire to awaken in the rest of his belov'd offspring attention to the truths he taught ;—but long the sordid passions had possess'd their souls :—these, like the baneful influence of an unfriendly meteor, chill'd each soft emotion of the heart ;—no bliss they knew, but such as avarice or ambition gave ; and, as an idle dream, esteem'd those pure delights which only cultivated minds enjoy.

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Hail,

Hail, science! lovely child of Heaven!—Although my longing steps have ne'er explor'd thy sacred academic groves, yet prostrate at thy shrine I lowly bend, and adore thy blissful sway.—Without thy influence the fair creation would become a cheerless void, and man less rational than the grim monsters of the howling waste.—At thy approach, ignorance and all its horrid train of passions unrefin'd retire, and harmony and joy illumine the social world.

At length arriv'd the day when Israel's aged breast was destin'd to sustain woes not less poignant than those which in Ephrath pierc'd his inward soul.—Full of confidence and the all-enlivening principle of love to Heaven, he op'd his grateful eye-lids on the morn.—He saw all nature shining with renovated

vated beauty, and his grateful ardours,
borne on the earliest wings of day, arose
before the ETERNAL.—GOD of my fa-
thers! he cried, who with tenderest
care led'st Abraham from beyond the
swelling billows of Euphrates, and to
his posterity decreed this fair and fer-
tile land—thee with love, with joy I
hail!—How glorious are the manifest-
ations of thy benevolence!—they are
impress'd on the silken texture of each
vernal leaf; even now they are written
with returning sun-beams in the shining
volume of the gay creation:—'midst
glistening dew-drops and expanding
flowers I discern thy effulgent footsteps;
and oft my conscious soul has heard thy
voice in the placid murmurs of the
gliding rill, or, soften'd breeze which
fans the waving groves.—Is there a
portion of the globe which owns not thy
creative power?—Should my adven-
t'rous

t'rous steps pierce even the depth of thickest woods, there every latent bud which springs beneath umbrageous shades, would own thy wisdom infinite ; —or should I quit the chearful beams of day, and penetrate the gloomy caverns of the earth, even there thy bounty shines, enlightening those seats of night.—What powers of language can I find expressive of my rapt'rous thoughts?—Teach me, O THOU, from whom my being was deriv'd, how I may best adore thine infinite perfections.

Oppress'd by sensations too extatic for feeble dust, the pious patriarch ceas'd speaking. He hid his face within his mantle, and sunk in rapt'rous silence.—The seraph, whom the Most HIGH had appointed to attend his person, beheld the divine transport ; with celestial pity he saw the incumbent flesh unequal

unequal to the aspirations of the eternal mind. The day will come, cried the benign immortal, when the veil of mortality shall be remov'd, and thou, child of long-tried virtue, shalt behold the supreme desire of thy soul; thou shalt clearly contemplate those divine perfections which now through clouds and darkness dimly are shadow'd forth.

Joseph, who had quitted his repose before the pensive songstress of the night had ceas'd with warbling melody to woo the lingering dawn, attain'd the paternal abode: his eyes, naturally brilliant, were oppress'd with languor; and those auburn tresses that were wont to wanton in graceful ringlets, now fell disorder'd on his shoulders. —At sight of the benign author of his being, his countenance brighten'd into smiles, but they resembled those transient rays of
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the sun, which often in the infant year contend with broken clouds and dissipated storms.

Israel beheld the pensive aspect of his belov'd.—Where, he exclaim'd, is that engaging chearfulness which was wont to sit on the cheeks of my son?—O my Joseph! hide not from me the cause of that disquiet which too evidently hangs o'er thy brow.—With impatient step, replied the lovely youth, have I sought thy abode, my belov'd parent, that in thy fond caresses I might find a solace for that sadness which now oppresses me. Thy counsels, my father, like the beams of the morning which dispel the mists, have often chas'd sorrow from the bosom of the wretched. I already feel my agitated spirits hush'd into peace, my drooping heart exhilarated by thy presence.

sence.—Sleep has denied me her invigorating influence. When at short intervals my watching eyes were clos'd, terrific visions have disturb'd my slumbers; unusual terrors alarm me; I fear, yet know not why.

In these incircling arms, replied the patriarch, as he folded the pensive youth to his affectionate bosom, repose thy disquiets, thou dearest offspring of my lamented Rachel.—Chase hence those melancholy fears, and let the voice of nature attune thine heart to joy. Look round her works, what does thine extended eye perceive but love and power divine?—If so conspicuous these are seen, doubt not but virtue is the care of HIM from whom all virtue is deriv'd.—Nothing, my child, in all the intricacies of human woe, can happen but by divine permission.—But say, have ti-

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things yet transpir'd from thy brethren who feed the flocks in Hebron's grassy plains? Hasten thou, and bring me the glad assurance of their welfare. I know the task is grateful to thy generous mind.

I go, my fire, replied the obedient youth. Delighted I obey thy every mandate. Urg'd by fraternal love, my willing steps shall lightly pass the lengthen'd way; but first I will hasten to the vintage, and there collect a present for my brethren, of what the genial year affords.—The tender parent smil'd assent, and Joseph, quitting the presence of his father, ran hastily to the vineyard, where, underneath luxuriant foliage, the mantling vine conceal'd her purple fruit: the juicy clusters, pluck'd with care, and cakes of finest flour, compos'd the liberal boon; and
climbing

climbing the craggy summit of the rock, he seiz'd the mellifluous stores which lab'ring insects had imbib'd from variegated flowers.—Fraught with the generous burthen, he return'd to receive paternal benediction, e'er he departed for the vale of Hebron.—Jacob fell on his neck ; he implor'd the blessing of the SUPREME on the first born of his belov'd. May the SHIELD OF ABRAHAM, he exclaim'd, be thy protection ! In safety may'st thou return to these arms, e'er the shadows of eve infold the hamlets of the vale in dark oblivion.—Such were the tender breathings of the affectionate parent ; but they found not acceptance before the ALMIGHTY RULER of ten thousand worlds. The archangel, who, wrapp'd in a celestial veil, presents continually the prayers of the faithful, saw with surprize the petitions of him who

was belov'd by the ETERNAL, rejected
at the everlasting throne.

Recline your heads ye lovely blossoms, that nourish'd by the youthful Joseph's care, have spread your perfumes o'er all the gay parterre. Who now shall watch your rising bloom? for he who nurtur'd you with water of the limpid rill, returns no more.—Ye pastures mourn; and thou, tall grove, where oft at noon he fed his flocks, assume a pensive hue; no more let spring renew your verdant robe, or paint your green, ye meadows, with her flow'ry pride; for he for whom ye smil'd, no more shall view your lavish sweets.

Joseph, with impatient step, pursu'd his way; his imagination delineated those pure delights which flow from the soft interchange of fraternal love: soon
he

he perceiv'd the vale of Hebron extended to his view, adorn'd with waving palms, beneath whose shade were seen shepherds reclining on the banks of an irriguous stream, which, gliding through the vale, perpetually refreshes its verdure.—With anxiety and ill-boding thoughts he wander'd through the plain, till stopp'd by a friendly stranger, who, with sympathetic tenderness, enquir'd for whom he sought; to whom the youth with eagerness replied, 'The objects of my search are those whom nature and affection have taught me to know by the endearing title of brethren.—The stranger quick inform'd him they had conducted their fleecy charge to Dothan.

It was now the sun had attain'd his meridian station, and darted his noon-tide beams o'er the languid earth.—

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The swains repos'd in slumbers beneath the shade, and fainting flocks in silence reclin'd on the parch'd soil; the feather'd choir had sought the covert of the thickest wood; and nought was heard save the gentle murmurs of the ever flowing brook. All was still as though nature herself partook of the general languor.—Oppress'd by the mid-day heat, Joseph sought the umbrageous shelter of a spreading tree whose mossy trunk seem'd coeval with the adjacent hills.—The seraph Abdiel took his celestial harp; he touch'd it, and fill'd the ambient air with divine harmony.—Lull'd by the soft melody, the benevolent youth sunk into a balmy slumber.

Now, swiftly gliding through the etherial space, a radiant form descended, whose splendor irradiated all the vernal

vernal plain.—Abdiel recognised his
 immortal friend, with whom, before his
 mission on earth, he had often mingled
 the rapt'rous effusions of felicity, in
 those extatic strains which resounded
 through the everlasting groves.—Hail,
 blest'd inhabitant of Heaven ! he said,
 what errand of high import leads thee
 from the bright regions of eternal day
 to this sublunar sphere ? Say, thou
 congenial mind, with what important
 message art thou fraught ?—The im-
 mortal Enoch replied, To share thy
 pleasing task, O seraph ! am I come,
 and guard with thee the virtuous son
 of Israel. This day he suffers by the
 crimes of others ; by the malignant
 passions of those who own with him
 one common fire ; his brethren will
 conspire against his guiltless life :—yet
 shall they not effect the ensanguin'd
 purpose ; but with malicious fury will
 they

they rend those tender chords which bind the social heart; they will force him from his natal land, from the endearments of the aged Israel.—A slave, a stranger in a distant land, he must be sold;—so the OMNIPOTENT permits.

Abdiel replied, in silence and in wonder, O Enoch! let us adore the dispensations of OMNISCIENCE. Enough for us, his finite creatures, to discern that what he wills is good—supremely good.—Oft in our ministry on earth we have beheld virtue oppress'd beneath the storms of life, while vice triumphant glides securely through a smiling world. The unerring hand of the SUPREME guides even the sad vicissitudes of human woe, and through the gloomy path of adversity, leads favour'd mortals to himself.——Sce'st thou

thou yon lucid cloud?—Through its light texture I discern the immortal Rachel, whom Israel yet in pathetic strains laments.—Oft have I heard him mourn her early doom, when the sweet bird of night sings through the grove; and when the silent moon keeps watch in Heaven, his plaintive voice pierces the midnight air.—Let us attend beneath the covert of this palm.—With maternal tenderness she seeks her son; for death, O Enoch! has no power to quench the pure lamp of social love.—It burns in minds divested of their clay, and through endless ages improves their bliss.

Whilst thus the seraphims convers'd,
the ærial cloud approach'd the surface
of the vernal earth: from it issu'd the
mother of Joseph, adorn'd with divine
beauty.—A roseate hue animated the

O

cheeks

cheeks of the fair immortal, fresher than the morning bloom.—She was girt with a radiant zone, and a wreath of unfading amaranth encircled her celestial brows.—From the day her spotless soul had left its lovely vehicle of clay, she had not ceas'd to revisit the plain of Mamre, where, cloth'd with mortality, the belov'd partner of her terrestrial bliss resided ; and often, when twinkling stars effus'd a gentle light, she had invisibly attended his solitary steps.

In the cool hour of prime, e'er yet the sun had gilded the horizon with his rays, she had sought her first born in the rosy bower, where he usually retir'd to breathe the sacred extacies of unaffected piety.—She found him not in the hallow'd recess ; and gliding through the etherial space, she descry'd him repos'd in soft slumber beneath the
umbrageous

umbrageous palm. A glow of ineffable affection heighten'd the divine radiance of her eyes, while (with all the mother display'd in her benign countenance) she thus address'd her sleeping son:—Belov'd object of my maternal cares!—When vested with mortality, I caress'd thy infant form, and watch'd over thy feeble steps:—now I contemplate thee, not with a love mingled with mortal frailties, but spiritualiz'd—refin'd.—How amiable are the ripening graces of thy mind! sweeter their incense than the fragrance of the everlasting hills;—they shall expand, not in the fatal sun-shine of prosperity, but underneath affliction's hallow'd shade.—Thee, O my son! the GREAT SOVEREIGN deigns to lead through many sorrows to that perfection of the human mind, which is attain'd by bitter conflict with the ills of life.—Beneath the

pressure of adversity thy virtues shall improve ; they shall yield a sweet perfume before the ETERNAL.

The celestial mother ceas'd speaking, but still continu'd to survey the benevolent youth, whose blooming countenance was irradiated with serene smiles, as if conscious of the presence of his immortal parent. She cast on him one more affectionate look, and re-passing the atmosphere with a motion swifter than thought, regain'd the orb where rested the great progenitors of the human race.

At an immeasurable distance they beheld the earth ; a lucid spot it seem'd, yet to their enlighten'd view her hills, her plains, and future kingdoms rose. — Abraham, the destin'd father of the faithful, sat communing with them of ages yet to come : with prophetic eye

eye he beheld those sacred promises
 fulfill'd which had decreed to him a fu-
 ture progeny innumerable as the stars.
 Where day's first beams illumine the
 eastern plains he saw his posterity ex-
 tended; Tabor and Hermon reverbe-
 rated JEHOVAH's awful name; Judea
 alone, of all the peopled globe, re-
 tain'd the pure knowledge of the Su-
 PREME. But as some winding stream,
 which, long restrain'd, exceeds at length
 its narrow bounds, bursts every barrier,
 and flows impetuous o'er the vale, so
 the sacred light spreads wide o'er all the
 earth;—nor hand of men, nor power
 of fiends impede its heavenly course:—
 empires long us'd with reverential awe
 to adore the star of day, now, with en-
 lighten'd piety, confess the POWER
 who from primeval darkness struck their
 hallow'd orb;—from woods profan'd
 by Pagan worship, resound the exalted
 strains

strains of rational devotion, and one
 vast temple seems the terrene ball.—
 The astonish'd patriarch exclaim'd, To
 thee, whose glory fills the everlasting
 throne, be ascrib'd all truth ; thou wilt
 accomplish thy word ; now, even now,
 I see my promis'd sons more numerous
 than the planetary orbs ; I hear them
 chaunt thy praise o'er all the verdant
 sphere :—so be thy name ador'd by
 grateful worlds, till through all space
 resounds one general hymn !

Adam now cast an expressive look
 on Eve, whose eye glisten'd with divine
 extacy. Is this, said he, my belov'd,
 that opaque sphere which was curs'd
 for our sakes ?—Can it be that world
 in which we planted sin and misery ?—
 I well remember when on that fatal day
 we from the sentence of our offended
 judge expected instant death, with a
 look

look soften'd by mercy he benignly
 spake, Thy posterity should bruise the
 serpent's head. Thus is then the inex-
 plicable prediction fulfill'd: the earth,
 O Eve! so beauteous ere we sinn'd,
 shall shine with renovated brightness;
 it shall be more glorious than on the
 day when it was first created; then only
 from a chosen spot resounded the praise
 of its ALMIGHTY MAKER; innume-
 rable tongues shall now declare his
 name, and spread his glory to the
 distant poles.

Eve heard attentive, but replied
 not;—she arose in rapturous silence;
 —she took her celestial lute, and ut-
 ter'd the effusions of grateful joy;—
 the cherubims were animated by her
 strains; they felt their sacred ardours
 exalted, whilst the mother of mankind
 rehears'd the exhaustless mercy of the
 OMNIPOTENT.

Isaac

Isaac, whose serene bosom whilst on earth resembled the smooth surface of the tranquil lake, was repos'd on the margin of a pure stream, attentive to the melody which was heard through all the everlasting hills. Near him sat Rebecca—on earth the tender partner of his soul.—O thou, he cried, sole cement of my earthly happiness; now my companion in these immortal shades; friend—sister—say, what words do even our newly acquir'd faculties afford, expressive of our love, our gratitude to the GREAT SOURCE of all our bliss?—Ye angels who visit oft the seats of pure delight—ye seraphims, who drink with us the fullness of eternal joy, join your exalted voices to my humble strain, and sing the fountain of eternal happiness; to his sacred presence lead, ye heavenly hierarchies, where, in extacies

facies divine I may dissolve, and lose
myself in UNCREATED EXCELLENCE.

The mother of Joseph had attain'd
the confines of the celestial orb ; her
approach was discern'd by Eve, amidst
the trees of immortal verdure. Comest
thou, O daughter ! said she, from yon-
der sublunary sphere ?—Ah ! regions
once of peace and pure delight, e'er
my crime brought misery on my race.
—In me behold the source of all those
evils which await thy darling son.—Ah,
fatal day ! when confident of strength
I fell.—Could yet my tears wash from
my lov'd offspring the foul offence,
these heavenly brooks should be aug-
mented by my sorrows.—But no ; the
day will come—I see it from afar—
when he, as by the OMNIPOTENT de-
creed, shall vanquish sin, and in the
precious streams of mercy obliterate

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the

the stain.—So spake the mother of mankind.

Now o'er all the languid earth the
 effulgent sun shot his meridian rays.—
 Fierce beams of noon oppress'd the
 fainting swains, silenc'd the music of the
 groves, and faded the verdure of the
 flow'ry meads.

(811)

T H E
L I F E
O F
J A C O B.
B O O K IV.

REFRESH'D by transient slumber,
the benevolent Joseph awoke.—
Hence ! far hence ! he cried, thou soft
sleep ! fascinating power, adieu ! no
longer seal my eye-lids.—How have I
wasted in repose the fleeting moments,
whilst Israel anxiously expects my re-
turn !—Perhaps, oppress'd with heat,
my fainting brethren sink beneath the
P 2 shade

shade.—How acceptable to them will prove those presents which I bear.—I will arise, and hasten to perform the filial task.

Soon from an eminence he beheld the shepherds tents, dispers'd over the enamell'd vale.—His social heart bounded at the sight ; and now, said he, I shall embrace my belov'd brethren ; I shall gladden them with the assurance of our father's welfare.—I shall present them with these tokens of my fraternal love.—O Judah, I discern thee beneath the umbrageous shade.—O Reuben ! I descry thy manly form.—Belov'd offspring of our common fire ! soon shall these affectionate arms alternately embrace ye.—Impell'd by those tender sensations, his agile steps acquire augmented swiftness ;—he resembles the fleet roe, which, bounding o'er the mountains

mountains, scarcely with his nimble feet
impresses the yielding grass.

The sons of Jacob perceiv'd him
from afar.—As the ready taper kin-
dles at the blaze, the malignant passions
which long had agitated their envious
breasts, burst forth with destructive
rage, when they beheld the guiltless ob-
ject of their hate alone and unprotected.
—Behold, said Napthali, the youth on
whom our father lavishes his partial
love!—What has that form to boast?
—What is that superior goodness which
deceives his doating age and casts on
us a darker shade?—Let us, my bre-
thren, examine this spurious virtue—
what is it?—to hang upon our father's
neck, and vent the effusions of a
feign'd affection—to sigh—to weep—
whene'er the tale of misery accosts his
ear.—These are the specious arts of
hypocrites;

hypocrites ;—yet these have stolen the affections of our father, whilst our more manly virtues pass neglected by him.—To climb the broken rock in search of vagrant herds ; to ford the redundant flood when swelling torrents heave its foaming wave ; to bear the rude north wind, the piercing cold of winter, or the summer's more intolerable beam.—These are acquirements in which the effeminate youth can never emulate us.

Reuben with mingled astonishment and grief, heard the first effusions of that base passion which had long burnt in secret within their breasts.—Ah ! why, said he, my brethren, suffer ye thus unkind suspicion to lurk within your hearts ?—What can the benevolent youth have done to merit epithets like these ?—If gentleness of manners
and

and unsullied truth, with an amiable solicitude for the happiness of all, deserve our love, Joseph our brother claims it of us; for I well know, whene'er our follies have attain'd the ear of Israel, the tender lad has form'd a thousand kind excuses for our conduct, and strove with unremitting tenderness to evade his just displeasure from us.—His youth—his innocence—but chief a mother's early doom, endear him in our father's eye;—yet which of us has e'er perceiv'd the least abatement of parental love?

Thus spake the first born of Leah; but as when a tempest rising in the bleak north o'erspreads the face of Heaven with a tremendous gloom, he beheld the countenances of his brethren o'ercast with malice and indignation;—sad prelude of that catastrophe
which

which soon must follow!—He was answer'd by Zabulon, whose eyes, as he spake, flash'd malicious fire.—If thou, said he, can'st thus ignobly submit to the usurper of our rights, and behold, unmov'd, the unworthy boy receive those fond caresses which are due to us, know we possess superior sensibility, nor tamely can endure our wrongs. Is it for him we bear the sultry heats of summer and the wintry blasts?—Whilst we in tedious toil consume the day, he, with insidious art, beguiles us of our father's love.

To him Asner rejoin'd :—Thy fond credulity, O Reuben ! makes thee the dupe of a designing boy. Thou suspectest not, that underneath that fair disguise, he bears a mind of blackest dye. His specious virtues are the effect of art—his piety—his tenderness,
all

all assum'd ; and when he melts in pity
for the crimes and miseries of others,
who sees not through the varnish'd
garb, hypocrisy, with all her invidious
train ?

Joseph had now pass'd the declivity
of the mountain. With extended arms
he advances towards his brethren ;
smiles of affection sit on his placid
brow. He approaches to embrace
them, but with malignant force they re-
pel the tender effort.—A traveller pas-
ses through a delightful country ; on
either side he is charm'd with the rising
beauties of nature, but chiefly a luxu-
riant prospect at a distance attracts his
sight ; he hastens to attain it, and ar-
rives at the enchanting spot ; at that
moment, as his delighted soul imbibes
the vernal pleasure, a lion rushes from
the covert of the rock. Pale terror

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seizes

seizes the astonish'd victim.—Thus the youth whose social heart had long dwelt with rapture on the pleasures of fraternal endearment, stands before his offended brethren mute with surprize and grief. He would demand the cause of such austerity, but his emotion suppresses the power of speech.

And now a distant murmur is heard among the many.—At length they articulate, Revenge! Revenge!—The infernal sound resounds through the deep caverns of the rock.—Reuben again attempts to speak; but as when contending winds sever the briny billows of the main, and to the angry skies lay bare the wonders of his dark domain, in vain the sinking mariner exerts his plaintive voice—it sinks—it dies amidst the noise of jarring elements.—Thus, with fruitless ardor,

dor, the first born of Jacob long sought the attention of his enrag'd brethren.—At length the impatient clamour ceas'd, and he again attempted to soothe their raging passion. What fatal madness, O my brethren ! said he, has seduc'd your better reason and will more benign ?—What infernal power has inspir'd those hearts where once fraternal tenderness resided ?—Is there not room enough for us in Israel's love ?—True, he with fond affection beholds our youthful brother—the child of his age—the sad memento of his lamented Rachel.—But are we then less belov'd by him ?—No, my brethren ; we are all dear to him who gave us life.—Forget those base suspicions, and again embrace the unoffending youth. See, he stands absorpt in anguish ; your unkindness wounds his soul.

Joseph now prostrates himself on the ground. With a countenance o'ercharg'd with sorrow, he looks up to his malignant foes.—He speaks.—
 Oh! say in what have I offended?—
 Name but my crime, and penitence shall succeed the unremember'd deed.
 —But Oh! these frowns I cannot bear.
 —Your unkind reproaches are worse than death.

Issachar interrupted the persuasive address.—Peace, said he, thou ambitious boy! nor with thy specious pleadings think longer to amuse us.—Hast thou forgot when the fair prospect of superior power charm'd thy nocturnal fancy? when, in the elevation of thy soul, thou saw'st the sun, moon, and eleven of the attendant stars, bowing in homage before thee?

And

And I remember well, said Zebulon, when tir'd with toil, his feeble limbs repos'd within my tent, he (waking) told me of his dream. O'er fields of ripen'd corn his imagination wander'd, and to his aspiring view presented his sheaf superior to the rest, which from our's receiv'd submissive homage.—Thus we perceive his daily schemes and nightly cares tend to dominion over us.—What then remains but that we seize the happy moment to revenge our wrongs ?

Gad, with malignant purpose, arose to address the envious assembly.—Where is now, said he, the bravery which ever mark'd the offspring of Jacob ?—Shall we suffer the sweet, the important hour, to pass us unimprov'd ?—Yes, we will submit to this futile lord ; we will be his slaves.—Ah ! start ye at the

the idea?—Then what remains?—His death alone secures our liberty.—He bleeds, my brethren—the usurper bleeds.

He spake, but none durst reply.—As if astonish'd at each other's perfidy, they stood mute.—'Twas dreadful silence.—Scarcely were the sounds of respiration heard by the attentive ear.—Near them stood, in awful suspense, those celestial beings, who by divine appointment were the invisible attendants of the households of Israel.—Grief and anxiety appear'd in each radiant face.—A horrid thrilling shook their angelic frames, and the resplendent spear trembled within each agitated hand.

Gad at length resum'd :—Why this unstedfast pause?—Want ye still courage

rage to affix the heroic purpose of your souls?—What is there so dreadful in the thought? We will dip that party-colour'd robe in the crimson gore, and to our father present the symbol of his partial love. Our well feign'd tale shall amuse his ear, and the bold deed be known to us alone.—Sudden, by one accurs'd impulse led, they cry unanimous, He dies! he dies!

Now earth trembled to her centre; the astonish'd sun retir'd behind an opaque cloud, and the guardian spirits, veiling their celestial faces, flew up to Heaven. With a slow and solemn pace they mov'd along the ethereal plain, and the black record laid before the sanctuary of ETERNAL JUSTICE.—Enoah and Abdiel alone remain'd; they stood on either side the guiltless Joseph, who now, arising from the earth, beheld

beheld, all self-collected, the effulgent steel.—FATHER OF ALL, he said, from thee, the exhaustless source of being, I derive existence. Let me not sink in annihilation; but may this vital spark for ever solace in thy love !

And now they whet the glittering knife ; they prepare to seize the unresisting victim, when Reuben again address'd them :—Ye know not, my deluded brethren, what ye do.—Ah ! have ye fathom'd the depth of those eternal horrors which will possess your guilty minds, should ye accomplish the accurs'd deed ?—Are ye prepar'd to brave the vengeance of offended Heaven ?—Ah ! stain not your hands with blood—with an unoffending brother's blood.—In yonder wilderness there is a pit obscure and deep ; deposit there, ye cruel men, the victim of your hatred.

Th

The proposal pleas'd the envious band ; and Judah replied, Thy unmanly weakness is now apparent ; the tears thou hast betray'd are unfelt by us ; but in compliance with thy timidity we assent.

Joseph now heard a sentence worse than instant death.—With compos'd accent he again address'd them.—If then, my brethren, ye seek my life, why with dissembled mercy do ye prolong my doom. Within this faithful bosom sheathe your murd'rous weapon rather than execute your cruel purpose by a lingering fate. Strike then, my brethren ! strike at once ! and may the ETERNAL look not on your deed ! may it be obliterated in the fountain of mercy !

Regardless of his melting voice,
they strip from his tender limbs the vest

R

of

of various colours, which Israel's affectionate hand had presented him ; and to the destin'd spot compel the patient sufferer, majestic in his woes !—Deep in the thickest covert of a wood they find the tremendous gulph, o'er-grown with baneful weeds and many a rugged thorn.—Near its dank verge no shepherd leads his flock, nor tune-ful birds sing on the adjacent spray ; but hid within the thorny brake the noxious reptile croaks, and pensive owls scream through the silent shade.—Enoah and Abdiel descended the abyfs, and on their outstretch'd wings sustain'd their belov'd charge, dash'd headlong from the horrid brink.—A shout, which seem'd to pierce the offended skies, burst from the malignant multitude.—The gloomy forest, unus'd to human voice, resounded the malicious joy.

Mean

Mean time Reuben had retir'd to a distant meadow ; he walk'd with pensive step, ruminating on the cruelty of his unfeeling brethren.—In every rustling breeze he hears their dreaded footsteps ; in every sound his imagination catches the plaintive accents of the injur'd Joseph ; impatiently he views the tardy son, and wishes for the friendly covert of the night, to release the youthful sufferer from the horrid pit.—Whilst thus he mus'd on the humane design, the vengeful brethren were withdrawn to a shade of congregated palms ; there, on the vernal turf, they spread those refreshments which Joseph, with fraternal kindness had convey'd, and with loud mirth sat down to the repast. Each on the fatal deed congratulating each, they pass'd the joyous moments, till the blushing sun stole down the slope of Heaven, and

Hermion cast a lengthened shadow o'er
the vale.

Within that happy clime, where spicy groves perpetually emit their fragrance to the ambient air, Hagar, when driven from her master's house, had repos'd her infant son, from whom, pursuant to divine prediction, a numerous posterity descended, invincible and fleet ; skill'd with unerring force to wield the impetuous arrow from the bow, or guide the untam'd courser o'er extended wilds. Of these, a part to commerce bent their view, and now their balmy treasures bore to where the Nile heaves his redundant wave,—
They were seen by the degenerate race of Israel as they pass'd within the limits of the distant horizon. Issachar, whose feet emulated the rapidity of the bounding hart, flew towards the mercantile
cantile

cantile band. They perceiv'd his approach ; they suspended their loaded camels.—Some of the brethren repair'd to the wilderness, where, in the dark abyfs, the hapless sufferer remain'd, magnanimous in grief. Already he seem'd to have pass'd the terrestrial confines and to soar above the stars. With a calmness, which the consciousness of integrity could alone inspire, he awaited the moment which should close his eyes in everlasting peace, when the voices of his brethren recall'd his attention back to earth.—Hastily they drew him to the light of day ; they unfolded their cruel purpose ; no flattering view of mercy allur'd his hopes ; he no longer sought that pity which their souls knew not.—Silently he walk'd amidst their ranks : still fraternal love triumph'd in his benignant

nignant eye ; it beam'd forgiveness on
his causeless foes.

So look'd, in after-time, THE MAN
OF SORROWS, when from Calvary's tra-
gic height he interceded for his mur-
derers.

The Ishmaelites, struck with the ami-
able exterior of the son of Israel, de-
liver'd for him the demanded price.
He accompanied them across the track-
less desert, and soon the tall cedars of
Dothan receded from their sight.—
One tender glance he cast on that lov'd
hill, whose blue top o'erlook'd the
plain of Mamre ; he saw the palms,
whose bushy heads shaded the paternal
dwelling. The sigh which softly stole
from his heaving breast was gentle as
the breeze of evening ; his pensive eye
was moisten'd, but he turn'd it, fraught
with pious fortitude towards the pity-
ing

ing skies, and meekly wip'd the impending tear.

Now was the delightful hour when the earth no longer felt the fervent blaze of day, but receiv'd its rays, darted obliquely through the fields of air.—Israel sat at the door of his tent, beneath a portico of intermingled branches, inhaling the refreshing fragrance of herbs and flowers. A myrtle, planted by the hand of Joseph, yielded its grateful incense ; and the dews of Heaven began to descend on the verdant pastures. In ardent expectation the fond parent number'd those heavy hours which separated him from the belov'd of his soul. Already his paternal cares foreboded some disastrous cause of delay.—O Israel ! much enduring man ! what shall sustain thy fortitude beneath the impending sorrows ?

sorrows ? The hour approaches when anguish inexpressible shall wring thy aged breast.—In the anxiety of his soul, the patriarch exclaim'd, Why tarrieth the prop of my declining years ?—Wherefore, O Joseph, art thou so long absent ? Hath some dire mishap befallen thee ?—Hasten, O my son ! to the arms of thy father, who feels a thousand apprehensions for thy safety.

While yet the pathetic exclamation hung on the lip of Israel, his sons return'd from the field.—In their hands they bore the raiment of Joseph, dipp'd in the blood of a kid.—They approach'd their aged parent, and Levi, presenting the crimson robe, began the horrific tale.—Behold, O my father ! said he, the vest in which thy affectionate hand array'd thy belov'd Joseph !—Ah ! where is now our brother ?

ther?—Doubtless he is slain by some ferocious beast.—This fatal proof too well declares the unwelcome truth!

The parental eye was fix'd immoveably on the crimson garment.—As yet, no tear friendly to grief stood in the visual orb—nor sigh, the eloquence of woe, disturb'd the awful silence.—Too well we perceive, O sire! said the insidious Simeon, thou acknowledgest the garment of our lamented brother;—yet where is now the fortitude which enlighten'd minds alone display beneath the pressure of affliction?—Think, O my father! thou hast other sons, who labour to assuage thy sorrows—to tender thee the soothing aids of consolation.—'Tis the property of reason to suspend the force of fruitless woe, and mitigate those evils which attend humanity.

S

Thus

Thus speciously he spake, but Israel heard him not.—Absorpt in anguish, he continued to gaze on the raiment of his son.—Thus, by the sculptor's chisel taught to mourn, the pensive statue reclines over the marble urn. At length the venerable mourner arose; he folded his aged arms;—he exclaim'd, Joseph is no more.—He whose virtue, whose filial piety, enlighten'd the gloom of my departing days, is torn from my tender embrace.—My son is no more!—I will mourn for him till the shadows of death encompass me—till this grief-worn frame shall mingle with the friendly dust.

Now enter'd the aged Miriam, whose once auburn tresses were silver'd by the hand of time; her forehead was impress'd by the furrows of age, but the mild domestic virtues shone in her
serene

ferene countenance. Her faithful attachment to the household of Jacob gave alacrity to her steps.—She had followed the blooming Rachel from the land of her nativity, and on her faithful bosom the lovely mother resign'd her latest breath in the vernal plains of Rama.—To thee, Miriam, she said, I consign my sons. Be thou the guardian of their youth, and let thy friendly counsels soothe the sorrowing partner of my soul.—She could no more.—The tender accents died on the pallid lip, and silence, eternal silence follow'd!—Then fell, O Israel! all thy hopes of sublunary bliss.—On the bright sunshine of thy life was set the impenetrable cloud.—Miriam had engraved on her heart the dying words of her belov'd mistress. From that day she had never ceas'd to watch with unremitting care her youthful offspring;

and now her feeble arm had supported the unstable steps of the infant Benjamin, who had collected the choicest flowers of the parterre to form a chaplet for his brother Joseph.

Soon the venerable domestic perceiv'd the footsteps of misery beneath that roof so late the seat of peace and social harmony; nor long did she remain a stranger to the fatal cause.—Within her wither'd veins the purple current instantaneous stopp'd; her benignant heart no longer beat; she sunk, bereft of life, and the angel of death receiv'd her virtuous spirit.—Now, disincumber'd from the mortal frame, no more she felt the infirmities of age;—with renovated youth she sprung; she sought the ethereal way.—The seraphic attendant on her flight conducted the pure soul to the orb where the faithful
are

are plac'd in everlasting felicity:—from the confines of that sphere, the immortals beheld her approach;—inspir'd with divine transport, they sung.

Rejoice, thou Heaven, and ye innumerable orbs, for a mortal has put on immortality! an inhabitant of earth becomes the inheritor of Heaven!—We hail thee, sister of light!—We congratulate thy entrance into the regions of everlasting repose!—Thou shalt no more feel the approaches of age;—sorrow and pain enter not these mansions of felicity;—here the presence of the ETERNAL diffuses an unclouded day.—Whilst thousands and tens of thousands of extinguish'd suns sink into oblivion, and all the planetary systems be annihilated, thou shalt survive, renew'd in youth; nor shalt thy
newly

newly acquir'd happiness decay, but still
bloom on from blifs to blifs, through
endless ages.

Myriads of happy beings now drew
near to hail the new possessor of immor-
tality. Rachel folded in a celestial
embrace her belov'd Miriam. Wel-
come, said she, thou virtuous spirit, to
these seats of divine tranquillity. I
have seen with what tender solicitude
thou hast guarded those who are dear
to me on earth.—For this I have visi-
ted the peaceful plains of Mamre at
noon or silent eve; beheld thy pious
efforts to inspire thy youthful charge
with a reverence of virtue.—I have
been thy invisible attendant in the thick
grove, and heard thee in friendly ac-
cents repeat my name.—Our belov'd
Joseph yet lives beneath the love of the
SUPREME; for know, thou new inha-
bitant

bitant of the skies, what mortals deem affliction, are often blessings sent by DIVINE BENEFICENCE, to correct the bias of the human heart, and form it for felicity.—But see'st thou not, my immortal friend, how every object around contributes to thy bliss?—yet these are but the dawnings of eternal day.—Lead, O ye seraphs, to the refulgent presence of our GOD.—Veil'd in light ineffable, thou shalt, my dear Miriam! behold HIM who created thee; who endow'd us with capacities for the enjoyment of himself.—There thou shalt imbibe the fulness of joy;—thou shalt dissolve in extatic transports of love and gratitude.

And now THE SIRE OF ALL, attentive ever to his suffering friends, bade Ethol descend to the plain of Mamre, there to diffuse celestial consolation to
the

the afflicted soul of Israel.—Obedient to divine command the seraph flew amidst unnumber'd worlds. He sought to conceal his effulgence, which was too dazzling for mortal sight, and arriving at the limits of that fluid which encompasses the globe, he mingled with the delicious odours which the earth, adorn'd with flowers and herbs, emitted from her fragrant bosom; these condens'd by the coolness of the nocturnal hour, had form'd a lucid cloud, in which the celestial veil'd his beaming splendors.

Israel had retir'd from his dwelling, now no longer enliven'd by the amiable converse of his belov'd Joseph. Forgetful of his fate, he seems to hear his melodious voice in the distant shade.—He starts—he looks around with impatient rapture—but, Ah! too soon his
bleeding

bleeding memory revives the horrid tale.—Again he fixes his mournful eye on the ground, and with sadden'd steps walks beneath the palms which surround his once tranquil abode.—Sometimes, with a profound sigh, he would look towards the spangled firmament; the azure concave glow'd with resplendent orbs, but he saw not the effulgent scene; every faculty was absorpt in woe.—What innumerable sorrows, he cried, are crowded in the narrow span of human life!—If this be all of man's existence, happy the tender babe who scarcely opes his feeble eye-lids on the ligh e'er they are clos'd in perpetual night!—But wretched he who is destin'd to sustain the tedious weight of fourscore years!—Alas! what bitter moments must he count!—how oft repeat the lengthen'd tale of human misery!—Did the OMNIPOTENT then

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give

give to man his wond'rous faculties but to augment the sense of woe?—Ah, no!—the soul recoils at the idea!—He has bestow'd on us capacities for happiness;—but in what state to be enjoy'd?—Is the bright mind design'd for annihilation with its clay? or, of a purer essence form'd, returns to its DIVINE CREATOR?—Why in dark clouds of vague conjecture is the important truth conceal'd?

Ethol now drew near. All nature felt the approach of the celestial hierarchy: the gentle zephyrs wav'd a softer gale; the distant fountain flow'd in harmonious murmurs; Israel felt his sorrows lighten'd, and serenity diffus'd through his powers: he was near a little arbour of jessamine, where he had often been delighted by the pleasing converse

converse of his lamented Joseph. . A tender melancholy, which he sought to indulge, led him to the charming recess; he reclin'd on the ground, and a gentle slumber insensibly clos'd his oppress'd eye-lids—Whilst the animal frame of Jacob was refresh'd by invigorating sleep, the Immortal led his vital spirit through the atmosphere, and passing myriads of resplendent spheres, they arrive at those placid regions allotted for the reception of virtuous minds, when releas'd from their vehicles of clay: there the patriarch beheld the progenitors of his race—Abraham, whose immortal brows were encircled by divine radiance, and Sarah, more beautiful than when her mortal charms enkindled a tender passion in the heart of Majesty.

T 2

Whilst,

Whilst, with extatic feelings, he be-
 held the illustrious race of beings glori-
 fied, his belov'd Rachel approach'd
 him, flush'd with eternal youth.—Tears
 of transport fell from the eyes of Israel ;
 —he essays to speak, yet feels himself
 unable to express the rapt'rous eleva-
 tion of his soul ! The lovely form thus,
 with ineffable smiles, address'd him :—
 O thou ! whose tenderness endear'd to
 me yonder sublunary scenes.—Partner
 of all my earthly bliss ! with reluctance
 my soul, yet ignorant of celestial joys,
 quitted thy belov'd society, when the
 hand of death separated it from its
 dust, in the green plains of Rama.
 Thou lean'st, absorpt in anguish, o'er
 the dying frame ; thou saw'st it sink
 into dissolution, and in thy affectionate
 arms press'd the lifeless clay. From
 the incumbrances of flesh releas'd, near
 thee I stood, nor thought of Heaven,
nor

nor of my flight to distant worlds—
 still loth from thee to separate. An im-
 material being, as I myself was now
 become, approach'd.—Sister, it said,
 why lingerest thou here?—Thou art
 now an immortal spirit, aerial and pure
 as one of us, no more oppress'd by pe-
 rishable dust.—Yon fields of space of-
 fer their wonders to thy view.—Eter-
 nity and bliss are all thy own!—In-
 stant I tried my newly acquir'd powers;
 I was lighter than the air which before
 I breath'd; I flew with the benignant
 spirit to those scenes of bliss, whose
 least delight exceeds earth's most ex-
 alted joys.—O my belov'd! thou seest
 the human soul is destin'd to survive its
 feeble tenement of earth. Why then
 glistens in thine eye the tear of grief?
 Why with pensive sighs heaves thine
 afflicted bosom?—Yet but a little, and
 the shadows disappear; the dawn of
 everlasting

everlasting day breaks forth. Happy, O Israel ! supremely happy they, who tread the tranquil paths of virtue ; angels themselves delight to hover around their sacred dwellings ; and precious in the ETERNAL'S sight are the sighs of suffering innocence.—Thou must now return to the earth, there to reside till the counsels of the HIGHEST are fulfilled ; then will I await the hour when death shall close thine eyes : I will conduct thy gentle spirit to these seats of undisturb'd felicity.—She ceas'd, but her voice, soft as the music of the spheres, still founded in the ears of the enraptur'd patriarch. Whilst he in vain sought the power of utterance, the lovely vision glided from his sight, and the seraph Ethol reconducted him to earth.

Jacob, refresh'd by his slumbers, awoke.—His sorrows were compos'd,
and

and a sweet tranquillity thrill'd through his frame. O immortality ! he cried, how transporting is the view thou openest to the enraptur'd soul ! Thy nearer prospect yields a joy beyond what earth affords.—I shall again behold my lamented Rachel ; we shall be reunited beyond the power of death to separate us.—The son I now deplore shall be restor'd to my longing sight ; my Joseph I again shall meet.—Enlighten'd by divine conviction I will suspend my griefs :—the days of mortality shall glide away like the rapid stream, and an eternity of bliss succeed.

To the first emotions of paternal sorrow succeeded a pensive calm in the wounded breast of Israel.—He reflected on the fate which had torn his belov'd Joseph from his endearments ; but all resign'd, look'd up to Heaven smiling

smiling amidst resistless tears.—So
 often in evening declination looks the
 sun, when his horizontal rays pervade
 those watry columns which are drawn
 from the briny ocean.—Nature,
 through all her works obeys thy will, he
 cried, GREAT SOVEREIGN OF THE
 UNIVERSE!—Shall man alone rebel?
 —Shall he repine at thy decrees who
 sees thy wisdom shine through all?—
 Does yonder daisy lift its beamy head
 till first thy breath dispels the wintry
 frost?—nor doth the smallest leaf,
 shook by autumnal winds, resign its pa-
 rent branch unseen by thee.—Not
 chance conducts this mortal scene, but
 wisdom infinite—wisdom combin'd with
 love;—whence then the fruitless tear—
 the stubborn sigh.—Be all thy dispen-
 sations, LORD, obey'd by me—by all.—
 Let no discordant voice disturb the
 harmony which reigns throughout all
 space.

On

On a day consecrated by the mournful parent to the remembrance of his belov'd Joseph, he had summon'd his children to the bower, where a social feast awaited;—them he welcom'd with cordial tenderness, but none durst meet his eye;—though mild and beaming love, to them it seem'd severe, and every glance they fear'd would penetrate the horrid secret of their souls.—In silence they sat around;—the artless tale, which was wont to enliven every fraternal meeting, was not heard;—cheerless and sad appear'd those scenes where once festivity expanded her guiltless wing;—sometimes they sought to awaken a faint dawn of mirth; but, like a tender exotic, that, wrested from its native soil, mocks the exertion of the florist's care, the transient flash expires, and gloomy melancholy resumes her power.—Jacob imagin'd he beheld those emotions

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of

of fraternal sorrow with which he was at once pain'd and delighted.—How amiable, he exclaim'd, my children, is this tenderness!—The pensive look, the struggling sigh, more eloquent than words, evince your affection for a lamented brother :—your grief endears you in my eye; but O my sons! whilst we indulge the tender feelings of the heart, let us not forget submission to the will of HIM who governs all events.—Shall not the DIVINE BESTOWER OF LIFE resume the boon when it seems good to his unerring view?—Attend me, I entreat, to yonder wood, where mournful cypress waves its sable top.—A sad, yet pleasing task awaits.

Slowly they arose, and follow'd their fire, who soon attain'd the awful spot.—Two ancient yews, whose branches had intermingled with each other, separated

rated for their entrance ;—through a narrow avenue of overshadowing boughs, they penetrated the centre of the wood ;—nature, who with sportive hand promiscuously had mingled fragrant woodbine with rugged thorn, and taught the rose to blush unseen beneath the cedar's ample shade, had here restrain'd her wild luxuriance.—A verdant circus was presented to their view ;—Jacob had here planted the cypress, emblematical of grief ;—its dusky branches mingling with the trees, shed around a deeper gloom.—In the midst of this recess was a grassy mound bounded by flexile willows, o'er which an odorous myrtle extended its shade and shed its fragrant blossoms.—You behold, my children, said the patriarch, the little monument which I have raised to the memory of Joseph.—Though his tender limbs have satiated the fury of

ravenous beasts, here we can assemble
 oft as the year renews the mournful
 day, and commemorate his fate.—
 Here, uninterrupted by the voice of
 mirth, we may indulge our sorrowful
 feelings, and drop a tender tear ; nor
 shall the GOD OF NATURE disapprove
 the amiable emotion ;—he has not
 given us affections to be suppress'd ;
 nor may the efforts of cold philosophy
 damp the ardor of the social heart ;—
 excess alone makes sorrow criminal.—
 Often as spring bedecks the meadows
 with opening buds, we will spread our
 flow'ry garlands o'er the tomb ;—the
 ascending fragrance shall remind us of
 Joseph's virtues ;—we will enumerate
 each perfection of his spotless mind,
 till, emulative, we adopt the fair exam-
 ple ;—nor hoary age shall blush to ob-
 tain improvement from the instructive
 theme.—What though the human
 frame

frame moulders within the earth, know,
 O my sons ! that virtue never dies ;—
 even from the icy bed of death it
 blooms a sweet perfume to Heaven.

Israel ceas'd to speak, and, oppress'd
 by his feelings, hid his venerable coun-
 tenance within his mantle.—Dinah,
 taking from her head, a wreath of jef-
 famin, laid it on the mossy hillock ;
 and Benjamin gathering the flow'rs
 which profusely deck'd the ground,
 scatter'd them around ; then both re-
 clining over it, mingled tears of inno-
 cence.—Rest here, said the weeping
 maid, ye early dews ; and show'rs dis-
 til your kindly drops.—Open your
 stores, sweet spring ! on this lov'd spot
 to pour your painted treasures.—Joseph
 is no more.—Never shall I see again the
 companion of my youthful hours.—
 Mourn honour, truth, and rectitude,
 for

for Joseph was your own ;—you took
him e'er the lamp of reason dawn'd,
and breath'd your influence on his
soul.

Whilst thus she utter'd the pathetic
soliloquy, the brethren, pale and trem-
bling, remain'd far distant from the sa-
cred mound ;—none durst approach it ;
they stood with their downcast eyes
fix'd to the earth ;—unable longer to
contemplate a scene which awaken'd
every sentiment of remorse, they were
fill'd with unutterable anguish, and one
by one withdrew.—Jacob was left with
the affectionate Dinah, and the last re-
maining offspring of his belov'd Ra-
chel ;—pensively he walk'd, absorpt in
those meditations which evade the de-
scriptive pen.—It is thus that, anima-
ted by the glorious light of immorta-
lity, a Christian surveys the death-bed
of

of those he loves.—Nature recoils, but
faith victorious triumphs o'er the grave,
and subdues each mortal frailty.

After had quitted the path which led
to his dwelling, and retir'd to a seques-
ter'd shade.—Ah! whither, he cried,
can I go?—Whither shall my wretched
footsteps wander?—Durst I return to
the tent where my smiling infants with
their mother await my return?—Ah,
no!—that is the abode of innocence;
—shall guilt and treachery enter there?
—Wretch that I am, what scene so
tranquil can afford me peace?—I will
seek the caverns where the grisly mon-
sters of the desert roar;—with them I
will associate, myself more brutal far
than they.—As thus his terrific ac-
cents pierc'd the air, Napthali ap-
proach'd him from a thicket, where, ac-
tuated by similar remorse, he had sought
con-

concealment.—O Asher! he exclaim'd,
 my unhappy brother!—Yet why pro-
 fane I that endearing name?—It be-
 longs not to us, the treacherous be-
 trayers of Joseph.—Nature disclaims
 us;—we have broken all her ties;—we
 are not her children;—she knows us
 not.—What anguish has our inhumani-
 ty planted in the breast of Israel?—
 yet what are his feelings compar'd to
 those which wring our guilty souls.—
 Even the painful emotions of a virtuous
 mind are accompanied by felicity
 which vice knows not in her most joy-
 ous moments.—Were those shining
 orbs which glitter in yon sky, and all
 their radiant glories mine, with rapture
 would I quit the splendid treasure to be
 possess'd of one such sweet sensation as
 inspir'd our sister when in tender strains
 she mourn'd the victim of our hatred.
 —O Asher! when once the rancor-
 ous

ous breast indulges the latent spark malign, who can declare how far the baneful influence will extend?—Why did we envy Joseph?—What had he done?

Reply thyself to that tormenting thought, return'd he furiously.—His merit is our condemnation;—had he been less amiable, we had been less guilty.—But could not our father mourn this son, without our being the forc'd spectators of his sorrow?—Why did he call us to the wood?—he might have breath'd his plaintive moans alone.—Fain would I silence the awaken'd monitor within, and again lull it into rest.—What opiate shall I find?—none;—the whole creation yields not such a power.—May shadows, dark as was our deed, rest on the fatal day when unattended he sought us in Dothan! But

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for

for that fatal opportunity our hatred
had ne'er blaz'd to the detested deed.

Vainly thou imaginest, replied Nap-
thali, that opportunity matur'd the black
design, or that our rancour had ex-
pir'd, like some glimm'ring flame de-
priv'd of air.—Ah, no!—The seeds
of vice once sown within the heart, die
not but by repentance;—each day the
malignant passion, unrestrain'd, acquir'd
new strength, till it destroy'd our inno-
cence and peace.—Thus an infant, with
unsuspicious care, nurtures the speckled
snake;—pleas'd with its variegated
beauty, he receives it an inmate of his
breast, nor feels till late the deadly sting.

As thus they utter'd accents of bit-
terest remorse, unmindful of the way,
they had regain'd the path which leads
to the patriarchal dwellings.—The
guiltless

guiltless family of Asher had long expected his return :—two lovely boys, once the fond objects of his care, urg'd by their anxious mother, had wander'd forth to meet their absent sire; they pass'd the silent pastures, and soon within the limits of the lawn perceiv'd their father. —Joy animated their feeble limbs;—they ran towards him, and hanging on his neck, express'd their artless transports.—He starts as from a dreadful dream; and looking sternly on his lisping innocents, bursts from their tender arms, and takes a distant road.—The affrighted pair run trembling to the cottage, and acquaint their mother.—Amaz'd, yet unable to suggest the cause of such disquietude, she quits the peaceful abode, and with disorder'd air, traverses the dewy plain.

Mean time the amiable mourners
 had return'd to the paternal bower :—
 pensive, yet tranquil, they appear'd ;—
 the look serene, the mien compos'd,
 yet sad, evinc'd a heart where virtu-
 ous sensibility and fortitude, the effect
 of confidence in Heaven, exerted mu-
 tual sway.—The plaintive moans of
 Zenah reach'd the ear of the compas-
 sionate maiden.—Attentive ever to the
 voice of woe, she flew to offer the
 soothing aid of comfort to the unhap-
 py.—Surpriz'd, she found the disconso-
 late wife of Asher, wandering with un-
 certain step across the moon-light plain.
 —What, O my gentle sister ! she ex-
 claim'd, calls thee from thy sweet do-
 mestic task at this unusual hour ?—Ah !
 cheerless and alone ;—Why those dishe-
 vell'd tresses and eyes bath'd in tears ?
 —Make not thy Dinah a stranger to
 thy

thy grief.—O best of sisters! return'd the afflicted Zenah, direct me, if thou can'st, to find the unhappy Asher.—He is departed from himself;—no more paternal smiles gild his brow; frowns and unkindness have usurp'd the place of tenderness and love;—even now he roams, far distant from his home, like some sad being in whom reason has retir'd from her throne.—Dinah, tenderly embracing her, weeping, replied, Behold, my dear Zenah! a sharer in thy sorrow.—Yes, I sympathize with thee!—But perhaps grief for our lamented brother occasions this unusual conduct;—yet sorrow mellows the ruthless heart.—Anger and unkindness are not the symptoms of a mind oppress'd by tender sorrows.—Whatever be the cause let us conceal it from our father's ear; pierc'd as he

is with woe, this new misfortune would almost quench the lamp of life.

Whilst she thus spake, Reuben advanced towards them.—Long had his manly brow been clouded with melancholy.—Zenah awaited not his approach ; she flew towards him, and impatiently enquir'd tidings of her Asher.—Calm, he replied, those fears thy tendernefs suggests.—Pity, O Zenah ! the wretched Asher ;—he is a stranger to repose.—Be it thy care to sooth his anxiety ; yet seek not with fruitless curiosity to explore a secret which perhaps ill suits thy gentle ear.—Leave him to Heaven, and enjoy that peace which conscious virtue yields.—This moment I beheld him, with hasty step, enter thy abode.—Zenah, whose countenance instantly brighten'd into smiles of joy, adjusted her disorder'd
air

air, and assuming a look of sweetness,
return'd impatiently to the cottage.

Reuben sought not the gentle aid of sleep; but pursuing his solitary walk, visited the dwellings of his other brethren:—in those once tranquil abodes he discovered the traces of horror and despair.—Some he found mournfully musing in a sequester'd part of the cheerless mansion, regardless of the pleasing prattle of an infant train;—Others reclin'd sleepless on their couch, the prey of anguish insupportable.—Awaken'd conscience shed around its dreadful terrors; for transient is the lethargy of sin in minds not wholly lost to virtue's sacred power.—Reuben, who had not ceas'd to regard with affection the youthful Joseph, felt the bitterness of remorse for his guilty pusillanimity; —his

—his tears mingled with the falling
dews, and his sighs disturb'd the silence
of the night.



THE
L I F E
O F
J A C O B.
B O O K V.

THE house of Potiphar was the
asylum which Heaven had ap-
pointed for the reception of the youth-
ful Hebrew;—there no galling fetters
awaited his tender limbs, no unkind
menaces accosted his ear; but soft com-
passion breath'd her gentle whispers,
and pity pour'd a lenient balm o'er his
sorrows.—Impress'd with every ami-
Y able

able feeling of humanity, the heart of the benevolent Egyptian soon became inspir'd with affection towards his patient slave ;—he beholds him with tenderness ; he weeps o'er his injuries :—often he hears him recount the pleasures of his youth, the simplicity of the pastoral life, and the artless manners of the shepherds.—He listens to his tales of engaging innocence whilst the silver moon pursues her silent journey through the Heavens, nor heeds the lapse of time, till smiling in the east Aurora opens the rosy gates of morn.

On a delightful evening, as the dews softly alighted on the tender grass, and the golden rays of the sun were receding from the summits of the tall groves ;—when high in air the tuneful lark was warbling her last song to the departing day, Potiphar, guided by friendship's sweetest

sweetest impulse, walk'd forth into the fields to meet the faithful Joseph returning from his rural labour:—he perceiv'd him approaching; fidelity and gratitude had inspir'd his tranquil countenance.—Let us repose, said the generous master, beneath this umbrageous shade: the beams of light retire, the stars deck the ethereal arch; I am impatient to hear the relation you yesternight began;—go on belov'd youth, rehearse the story of thy wrongs; I am interested in the affecting recital; my heart sympathizes in thy sufferings.

Joseph, with complacent looks, replied, Though painful the task, I will resume my sad narrative.—Often has thine ear, my kindest benefactor, heard my delighted tongue dwell on the felicity of my earliest days.—Thou hast heard me speak of Israel's tenderness,

ness,—of Benjamin's endearments,—
 nor till the hour which beheld me forc'd
 from my native country, had I experi-
 enc'd the cruelty of my brethren ;—
 then did I cast a wishful look on Mam-
 re ; I look'd for some pitying hand,
 but there was none.—As I follow'd,
 with reluctant steps, the merchants who
 were now the masters of my fate, I cast
 a parting glance on my unfeeling bre-
 thren ; joy animated their faces ; and
 when at a distance from Dothan's
 flow'ry plain, their chearful shouts
 pierc'd my ear.—O Israel ! I ex-
 claim'd, how will thine affectionate
 breast sustain the recital of thy Joseph's
 sufferings.—Ah ! may'st thou never
 know them ! But rather suppose he
 sleeps in the peaceful bosom of the
 earth.—Ye hills of Canaan ! never
 shall I again climb your verdant sides.
 —Adieu, ye rocks ! on whose craggy
 summits

summits I have hail'd the rising morn.
 —Ah! who my flocks shall lead you
 to the limpid stream, or explore for
 you the fragrant herbage?—I go to a
 far distant land, where no kind father
 dwells, no infant brother runs with
 tott'ring step to welcome my return.

The merchants, by a thousand tender
 assiduities, sought to alleviate my sor-
 rows; to erase from my memory all
 traces of my wrongs; but the idea of
 my venerable parent deploring my ab-
 sence, haunted my imagination, and
 shook the fortitude which the cruelty of
 my brethren had been unable to do.—
 I thought I beheld him tearing those
 silver locks which are whiter than the
 snow-crown'd top of Caucasus;—I
 heard him vent his unavailing sorrows
 to the pitying gales, and making the
 woods of Mamre reverberate the name
 of

of his lamented Joseph.—You have seen in the moments preceding a tempest the powers of nature suspended in a dead calm, ere the awakening storm pours out its fury ; the face of Heaven is obscur'd by congregated clouds ; the silent winds at distance sleep ; not a breeze disturbs the dusky lake ; even the aspin ceases its tremulous motion ; the growling storm is heard at a distance through the sadden'd forest : as it approaches nearer, the cedars bend their lofty tops ; the rising whirlwind roars through the arch of Heaven ; the rivers, swoln by impetuous cataracts, rush o'er all the delug'd plain, and sweep the devoted hamlet from its base.—Thus the grief which was too great for utterance, long rankled within my breast ; the attentive ear heard not my sighs ; no tears bedew'd my cheek ; I walk absorpt in melancholy ;

choly ; I saw not the stupendous mountains on either side, nor regarded those majestic woods which are coeval with the earth ; and now the night had wrapp'd the earth in a pleasing gloom (for in that pure sky the lustre of the Heavenly bodies is never obscured, but innumerable hosts of stars are ever seen glowing in the fields of azure). The merchants repos'd on the banks of a river ; they releas'd their loaded camels, and prepar'd a genial repast.—I retir'd from the festive company to indulge my sorrows ; the planetary orbs were reflected in the waters.—Through a chasm of the mountains I could perceive the hills of Canaan still above the horizon. I saw their lofty summits illuminated by the mild radiance of the moon.—Ah ! I cried ! my belov'd land, must I no more revisit thee ? Mamre, in whose
 tranquil

tranquil bowers my happy youth was
 pass'd in innocence and bliss, farewell !
 I shall no more lead my flocks along
 thy flow'ry plain ; I shall no more
 chant my careless lays beneath your
 shade, ye pines !—The smiling Benja-
 min in vain expects my return ;—my
 father will no more fold me in his arms.
 —Should I now, aided by the shade of
 night, endeavour to return, whether
 could my hapless footsteps wander ? I
 can never explore the trackless desert ;
 the monsters of the wild would ob-
 struct my flight ; I never shall behold
 again the bowers of peace.—I cast myself
 on the dewy earth ; loud sighs rent my
 bosom. In the violence of my despair I
 grasp'd the spangled verdure ; I wish'd
 myself within the bosom of the deep.
 —To what purpose, I exclaim'd, do
 I sustain this hated life ?—to slavery ?—
 to misery ?—No ; I will annihilate it ;
 —it

—it shall glide away in the limpid
 stream;—I will be as though I had ne-
 ver been!—At that moment, sounds
 more than mortal struck my ear; they
 were inexpressible by human powers.
 —The violence of my grief instant-
 neously subsided, and I felt compo-
 sure and manly resignation possess my soul.
 —I again threw myself on the earth,
 but retain'd not my former sensations.
 —I address'd the OMNIPRESENT with
 placid submission;—I beheld him in
 the amiable light of a tender parent,
 who, in the exuberance of his love,
 visits his children with paternal correc-
 tion.—God of my fathers! said I, for-
 give the weakness of humanity; even
 now I abhor my rebellious will, and fly
 to thee for pardon and support.—
 Strengthen, O God! my weak obedi-
 ence; no more I revolt at thy decrees;
 lead where thou wilt, to slavery or to
 death.

death.—Imagine a wretch detain'd from the chearful light of Heaven in some subterraneous abode ;—he feels the oppressive darkness ;—horror and fear assail him on ev'ry side.—In some propitious moment he breaks from his imprisonment, and hastens to the enlivening day ; he beholds the face of nature irradiated with the solar beams, and his soul is fill'd with an inexpressible transport.—Such was the joy I felt diffus'd through my breast ;—the gloom of despair was no more.—I arose with alacrity, and return'd to the merchants ;—from their discourse I learnt that Uziel, the chief of their bands, was at Damascus ;—thither they determin'd to conduct me.

And now the morning beam'd on the mountains.—My eyes were no longer insensible to the charms of nature ;—
they

they dwelt with rapture on the scenes around, which were more beautiful than imagination can form. The country through which we pass'd resembled a luxuriant garden; lawns of the most lively verdure were cover'd with innumerable flocks, whose fleeces emulated the new fall'n snows; trees of umbrageous foliage overshadow'd innumerable flow'rs of the richest dyes and most exalted fragrance,—the vine crept along the azure rocks loaded with delicious clusters; the glowing tints of the orange were seen through the vernal branches, and a variety of exquisite fruits adorn'd the beautiful enclosures.—Such are the beauties which charm the admiring traveller as he passes through that delightful country;—but how august the distant prospect! Towards the east, Caucasus hides his majestic head amidst the clouds, and Taurus lifts his hoary top:

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—you

—you behold the extensive forest of Libanus, waving with thousands of aspiring cedars, planted by the GREAT CREATOR.—To the west rises the great sea*, covered with innumerable ships, and interspersed with islands that are rob'd in verdure, and crown'd with fertility ;—the distant billows reflected the beams of the sun, and glitter'd with resplendency beyond the lucid diamonds of the east.—I contemplated the magnificent scene, and sunk, oppress'd by my sensations.—How wonderful, I cried, O thou ADORABLE CREATOR ! is the display of thy power !—all which my astonish'd sight beholds, hast thou form'd ; yet is this scene, so extensive, so august, but a part of thy works !—yea, the spacious earth itself appears as nothing amidst the immensity of thy creation !—how transcendently glorious then art thou !

On

• The Mediterranean.

On our arrival at Damascus I was presented to Uziel:—he was an old man, but his figure was perfectly graceful;—his silver locks fell on his shoulders;—his countenance, impress'd by the furrows of age, was inexpressibly serene, and his eyes were at once mild and penetrating;—he was form'd to inspire reverence and love.——I approach'd him with sensations similar to those I had been wont to feel in the presence of Israel my father;—he receiv'd me with tenderness, and turning to the merchants, enquir'd by what means I became their property;—they acquainted him, with an air of self-applause;—but scarcely had they ended their relation, than his countenance express'd the deepest displeasure;—his eyes, which seem'd to have been long unus'd to resentment, flash'd indignation;

tion ;—in accents awful and commanding, he condemn'd the inhuman traffic.

I was tenderly lov'd by Uziel, who delighted to employ those hours which the sons of avarice pass'd in counting their sordid treasures, in the cultivation of my mind.—He had pass'd his life in an intercourse with the different nations of the earth, had studied mankind, and was vers'd in the knowledge of human nature ;—to him science had unfolded her sacred mysteries ;—he studied the motions of the Heavens, and the order of nature ;—but above all, he had contemplated the DIVINITY in the stupendous works of the creation ;—his devotions were animated with sacred ardour, and his piety beam'd forth in benevolence to all mankind. —Thus, whilst he unfolded to me the treasures of knowledge, he ceas'd not
to

to expatiate on the beauty of virtue, and the amiableness of an unaffected piety.—I felt an inexpressible pleasure in attending to his instructions :—as the still drops of the night descend on the fragrant blossoms, his words penetrated my soul ;—they invigorated every faculty.

I saw at Damascus inhabitants of various countries ;—those who resided beneath groves of the most precious spices and perfumes, brought hither their odoriferous treasures ;—fine linen of the east, and garments of the richest purple were profusely seen.—Crowds of merchants annually frequented the city ; they purchas'd the produce of the different climates, and exported them to the various countries of the world :—the ocean, which seems to separate mankind, is by them render'd the cement

ment of nations ;—they move with rapidity along the surface of the wat'ry element, and commit themselves to the vicissitudes of winds and waves.—— My venerable friend fail'd not of engaging my attention to the various objects which surrounded us, from each of which he would draw observations for my instruction.——There is nothing, he us'd to say, however inconsiderable or trifling, but to the assiduous mind will furnish hints for the advancement in knowledge or virtue.——Behold, my dear Joseph ! he would say, the busy scenes with which you are surrounded, and learn to venerate those arts which augment the comforts of life.—Industry and commerce are the sinews of wealth ; by these a nation procures ease, affluence, and refinement.——Withhold not reverence from those, who, to adorn their land with all the various products

products of the globe, forego the sweets of social life, and plow the watry element.—Yet in those fruits which painful industry procures, too oft an evil lurks, of which, O my youthful friend ! beware. Dread luxury, which enervates the mind and nurtures vice ; for virtue, O Joseph ! is no less necessary to the welfare of a state than to that of private life. Whene'er a nation is immers'd in vice, know that its destruction is at hand.

In the society of my sage instructor I enjoy'd so exquisite a pleasure, that I had almost forgotten my injuries.—The time approach'd for our departure ; and we travers'd those vast deserts of Arabia, where the intense heat is augmented by prodigious tracts of burning sand.—Here we saw not the most distant foliage, nor perceiv'd the smallest riv'let to

allay our excessive thirst ; no tuneful bird is heard to chant, nor low of herds delights the ear : sometimes an impetuous gale sweeps the calid plain ; the dissipated dust obscures the air, and threatens the hapless traveller with destruction.—My final separation from Uziel was now approaching. I fell a prey to the bitterest anxieties. The uncertainty of the fate which awaited me fill'd my imagination with terror.—One night, as I was retir'd to rest, after having offer'd my devotions to the ETERNAL, I fell asleep. Two lovely youths appear'd before me ; they were more beautiful than any object I had ever beheld ; their flaxen hair wav'd in ringlets on their graceful shoulders, and their countenances resembled those charming tints which adorn the sky when first the day issues from the east.—One of them address'd me, and as he spake

spake I felt a divine tranquillity:—Son of Israel, said the charming vision, chase from thy breast these traces of despondency : know, all the actions of men are weigh'd in the balance of ETERNAL JUSTICE ; he has commanded us to prepare for thy reception in Egypt ; there thou must a long season remain, so the MOST HIGH decrees : Yet repine not thou at his dispensations ; those whom he loves he chastens. As thy guardian angels, he hath commision'd us to attend thy steps ;—with delight we execute. See then thou murmurest not at his sov'reign will.—I awoke at the celestial voice ; I look'd around for the Heavenly messengers, but saw them not, yet still their serene accents sounded in my ears. I felt an inexpressible composure, and arose to return thanks to the God of my fathers.

Pardon, O BEST OF BEINGS, I exclaim'd, the weakness of humanity : even whilst this stubborn heart recoils at thy decrees, it owns thy dispensations good.—If yet my bounded reason sees not the purpose of thy wisdom ; if in my breast lurks there a secret wish to evade the dictates of thy providence, forgive the mortal frailty. Lead, then, my God ; no will perverse in me remains. Do thou but prop my weak resolves, and I shall meet with fortitude whatever thou ordain'st my lot. The extended world is thine ; and should I dwell where human foot has never trod. Amidst the barren wilderness, or on the dreary summits of those hills where cheerless winter ever reigns, can I be wretched whilst surrounded by thy love ? 'Thou alone can'st satisfy the thirst of happiness which springs for ever in the soul.—Where e'er thy presence

sence shines, there peace and heart-felt joy must ever spring.

We were now near a certain city, whither the merchants, led by commercial views, directed their way.—Uziel said to me, You have, my belov'd Joseph, beheld cities enrich'd by commerce, and industry rewarded with affluence; but you have never seen the most amiable object in the creation—a good man, oppress'd by calamity, yet sustaining the afflictive storm with pious intrepidity.—Here you will see one made perfect by suffering, and welcoming the severe dispensations of OMNIPOTENCE.—What is the darling splendor of greatness—what the lustre of power and ambition to such a sight? which Heaven itself contemplates with delight.—You shall behold a man made great by patience—the venerable Job
superior

superior to his sorrows; from his mouth
 you shall acquire wisdom, and learn
 from his example to endure adversity:
 a science, infinitely more abstruse than
 the knowledge of those resplendent
 orbs which move in yonder space.

As we enter'd the gates, we beheld a
 vast multitude crown'd with wreaths of
 cypress, and bearing in their hands large
 baskets of the freshest flow'rs. Their
 slow and solemn steps were responsive to
 the pensive airs of various instruments
 of music.—Twelve youths, rob'd in
 white garments, preceded the mournful
 procession; they carried branches of
 myrtle, and sung as they mov'd along
 the excellence of him whose death they
 lamented.—Uziel soon obtain'd the
 sad intelligence, that his friend, whom
 he hop'd to have press'd to his bosom,
 was gone down to the dust.—Ten
 times

times the sun had perform'd his course, through Heaven, since he had ceas'd to be among the living.—As often as the returning spring strew'd her odorous treasures in the lap of nature, his descendants and friends commemorate the day, which depriv'd the world of so fair a pattern of meek-ey'd patience.

The afflicted merchant retir'd awhile to pay the tribute of tears to the memory of his friend. As for me, I attended the solemnity to the tomb, which was of Parian marble, unornamented by sculpture or imagery. The choral youths laid their garlands thereon, and plac'd on the urn an immense quantity of the most costly perfumes.—With a taper they enkindled the fragrant heap; the curling smoke ascended, and the air was fill'd with the odoriferous incense.

cense. Whilst the precious offerings were consuming, they pour'd around libations of the richest wine, and the white-rob'd youths sung.—Benignant shade ! if yet thou hoverest around, accept the tribute which we pay to the memory of thy virtues !—Bright star of the east !—As the spicy odours are diffus'd through the air, so was the fame of thy excellence dispers'd through the nations.

Our grateful libations shall flow around, for thy benevolence surrounded the dwellings of the wretched.—Who has not heard the name of JOB ?—What climate so remote that has not been visited by the fame of his fortitude ?—While time performs its course, and the rosy year renews its sweets, we will celebrate thy virtues !—Posterity shall revere thy memory !

Uziel;

Uziel, unable to bear the violence of his sorrow, had retir'd to an adjacent grove. When the pensive multitude was withdrawn, he approach'd the tomb ; I saw him from a distant palm ; —he walk'd around the sacred spot, and he utter'd his lamentations, but I could only hear his profound sighs : he retir'd not to rest, but spent the night at the tomb of his friend.——Whilst my mind was impress'd by the solemnity I had seen, I beheld a venerable figure standing before me :—it was an old man, of a grave serene countenance ; inflexible patience and manly resignation were apparent in the lineaments of his face. With a majestic step he advanc'd towards me ; and, with a benignant smile, said, O youth ! to whom the ETERNAL hath allotted the bread of adversity, be not dismay'd, but tread with resignation the path which lies be-

fore thee. From the earliest dawn of reason I sought him ; my way was perfect in his sight, yet he caus'd me to drink of the cup of affliction. I was oppress'd by many sorrows ; but as the beams of the sun succeed the black storms of the north, so did the SUPREME cause prosperity to reward my probation.—I came forth from the arduous trial as gold from the refiner's pot.—Thou must pass through many sorrows, yet hold fast thine integrity ; thy days of mourning will be precious in his sight ; he will reward thy years of adversity.

At that moment Uziel call'd me.
 —The rays of the morning were playing on the mountains ; they illumin'd the marble tomb.—We quitted the awful spot, and pursu'd our way to Egypt.—Soon the massy walls of
 Memphis

Memphis arose to our view ;—we beheld the Nile, swoln with angry pride, diffusing its redundant waters o'er the land ;—a-festive troop hail'd the welcome harbinger of plenty ;—the youths and virgins form'd a dance along its sedgy banks.—Surely, my friend, I cried, we have attain'd the regions of undisturb'd felicity. The iron hand of care alights not on these happy people ; their minds are serene as the breeze which salutes their plenteous soil.

These, replied the merchant, are the Egyptians, assembled, as their annual custom is, to celebrate the source of their fertility. Thou wilt not here, my son, behold, as in the land of thy nativity, refreshing showers watering the thirsty ground ; no timely rains call forth the swelling buds and opening flowers ; but the river which thou seest,

at stated periods is replenish'd by torrents from the mountains of Abyssinia ; then the redundant flood exceeds its bounds, and deluges the thirsty soil :—The earth enrich'd, yields her abundant stores ; luxuriant herbage robes the vernal pasture ; the green blade springs exuberantly ; and twice the smiling year sees golden harvests crown the vale.—Hence then the transport which thou leest ; nor wonder we the sons of Egypt celebrate with festive songs the fountain of their wealth.

If it be so, I return'd, then surely these triumphant songs express the voice of gratitude.—'Tis she, my friend, inspires the dance ;—'tis she who swells the vocal reed.—O sacred gratitude ! daughter of piety ! How transcendently lovely art thou ! As the beams of the sun impart flavour to the glowing
fruits

fruits of autumn, so does thy influence give a zest to ev'ry blessing ! The mind which sees not the fair creation through thy mirror perceives a horrid blank !—a vacuum all !—Without thee, rip'ning suns and vernal showers are giv'n in vain ;—thou enablest man to taste the various bounties that enrich his lot, and it is thou who swell'st the harmony of angelic harps. Come, heav'nly Pow'r, and evermore possess my soul ! Even while I pluck the unsavory gourd that crowns the steril rock, I'll tune my song to thee.

Uziel, with a smile, heard the soft rhapsody.—How beautifully, said he, has thy youthful fancy drawn the most amiable passion of the human breast. Yet know, my son, gratitude is not among the joyous throng to whom thou erroneously ascribest it. Seldom are her
 footsteps

footsteps found in the polluted dwell-
 ings of mortality ; riot and wild dis-
 order impel those whom now thou seest
 gayly dancing on the enamell'd mead.
 —The Egyptians once were happy in
 the pure knowledge of the SUPREME ;
 then, as the rising flood surpass'd its
 bounds, the kindling soul glow'd with
 exalted rapture, and songs of praise re-
 founded to the distant shores : but now,
 no longer guided by that sacred light,
 they perceive not the GREAT FIRST
 CAUSE who governs and directs the
 various powers of nature. Thou, my
 belov'd Joseph ! whom, probably the
 divine will has destin'd to dwell with
 this people, preserve unstain'd the faith
 which thou hast receiv'd from thy fa-
 thers ; and know, the highest happiness
 which the CREATOR bestows on man is
 the exalted privilege of knowing HIM
 aright.

Thus

Thus engag'd in instructive converse
 we attain'd the borders of Egypt. How
 lovely, said I, is the face of this coun-
 try! it resembles a well-cultivated
 garden.—It is beautiful, said Uziel,
 by nature, and it is improv'd by those
 arts which augment the blessings of
 life. The people are industrious; they
 apply themselves to husbandry; and
 the earth, ever grateful, rewards their
 labours; they export the product of
 their fields; and, in exchange, receive
 gold, silver, and rich apparel. Thou
 wilt here perceive a mode of life which
 resembles not that thou hast seen in the
 dwellings of thy father: thou wilt be-
 hold a people cloth'd in magnificent
 garments, whose houses are adorn'd with
 costly ornaments. The simple avo-
 cations of the shepherds are an abomi-
 nation to this polish'd nation. Thou
 must

must no more follow the bleating flocks
as on the hills of Canaan.

Alas ! I exclaim'd, with a sigh, must
I for ever resign the sweet employment
of my youth ? Delightful days ! when
o'er the mountains I led the flocks of
Israel.—Still in that pleasing task in-
dulg'd, this bleeding heart might yet
again find peace. I would lead my
fleecey charge far from the haunts of
men ; I would teach them to listen to
my tale of sorrows : — But tell me, I
continued, wiping a pensive tear, tell
me, my sage conductor, are these peo-
ple more happy for the acquirements
you describe ? Have they not lost in
exchange for them a more inestimable
treasure, simplicity of religion and man-
ners ? — True, O my son ! return'd
the merchant, that simplicity they no
more retain ; yet beware lest we arraign
the

the designs of providence.—Liberally o'er the extended earth hath the CREATOR dispers'd his blessings, and wills mankind, by mutual intercourse, to enjoy those various gifts:—Let us then possess with gratitude, nor by indulging luxury, or avarice (corroder of the heart), pervert the favours of benignant Heaven.

Slowly on their massive hinges op'd the brazen gates. We enter'd the city amidst a gazing multitude.—A traveller, intent on exploring the secret wonders of nature, descends into a cavern where the sun had never darted an enlight'ning beam. The dense vapours seize on all his pow'rs; an horrible dread thrills through his frame.—Such were my feelings at the near approach of that moment which must for ever separate me from my dear Uziel,

whom I regarded with filial affection. I look'd around to fold him in a last embrace; to thank him for his cares, his love; but he was no where to be found.—Doubtless, unable to sustain the parting anguish, he had mingled with the crowd.—And now I lifted my clasp'd hands to Heav'n.—The time is come, I cried, GREAT RULER OF EVENTS! Be thou the guide of my sad fate! All from thy paternal hand is good.—The Ishmaelites who accompanied me, forgot for a while their hopes of gain to contemplate with astonishment the magnificence which every where adorns that city.—As for me, I regarded not the stupendous edifices, nor observed the splendor which on ev'ry side appear'd.—The Egyptians throng'd around us; some even dropp'd a tear of pity for my early sorrows.—Soon I perceiv'd thee advancing

ing on the mart : my soul recognis'd
 thine, and claim'd an interest in thy
 breast.—Need I proceed ;—the rest
 thou knowest.—Thy kindness has
 abated the rigour of my destiny, has
 sooth'd my grief-worn mind.—These
 groves, these hills have witness'd to my
 gratitude ; often have they resounded
 with the recital of thy benevolence :
 the rising and the setting day have
 heard the grateful theme.

Joseph had ceas'd to speak, yet still
 his pleasing accents dwelt on the ear
 of Potiphar.—He sat silent and atten-
 tive, as if list'ning to the affecting nar-
 rative ; then withdrawing his moisten'd
 eye from the ground, he tenderly ex-
 claim'd, Why art thou silent, belov'd
 youth ?—Still could I listen to thy
 voice ; still weep o'er the melting story
 of thy sorrows.—What filial tender-

ness, what pious fortitude have mark'd
 thy earliest years!—May ne'er misfor-
 tune persecute thee more!—Here may
 thy future days be pass'd in peace! and
 when I feel the weight of years, and
 hasten to the lot appointed for all of hu-
 man race, may then thy friendship irra-
 diate that gloomy hour, and smoothe
 my passage to the shades of everlasting
 night!—But whence the blifs which now
 pervades my soul?—From Thee, GREAT
 FOUNTAIN OF BENEFICENCE we de-
 rive the joy of giving joy.—Thine are
 the precious overflowings of the heart,
 that whilst dilating in the good of
 others, tastes a felicity which emulates
 celestial raptures.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



